

P O E M S
AND
LETTERS

Of the Late REVEREND

Mr. *Hubert Stogdon*,

Collected from His ORIGINAL PAPERS.



L O N D O N :

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T H E P R E F A C E.



*If the reader shall compare some [a] lines of a poem, inserted in these papers, upon the occasion of Mr. Stogdon's death, with the Memoirs of his life, * he may observe somewhat of inconsistency. To prevent its appearing, those lines must have been alter'd, or dropt. But, tho' the description contain'd in them be not in fact applicable to this excellent person's behaviour at*

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the

[a] When death attack'd him with his tort'ring train,
And all his subtle instruments of pain,
He view'd the final glass, and tyrant's dart,
And smiling bid him dip it in his heart.
He saw the direful glutton's ghastly mirth,
Pleas'd with the luscious bait of dying earth.
His eager prayers the lazy sand provoke;
His eager soul petitions for the stroke;
[Thus ripe for bliss he forc'd the feebl' clay,
Shook off mortality, and shot away.]
So purest Ether struggles still to rise,
And with impatient instinct seeks the skies.

8. Ne

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* Vid. Memoirs, pag. 66.

the time of his death, as the Author (who has not allow'd his name to be made publick) might presume from the general character, or apprehend through mistake upon the remembrance of what he had read, or heard; yet, one couplet excepted, all are aptly expressive of what had been in a former Sickness, and might probably have been in his last, if the lingering disorders of his bodily constitution had not made a difference.

With reference to the collection here publish'd, as Remains of Mr. Stogdon, it may be needful, not only to assure the reader that they are genuine, but to give some account of the publication of them.

Some corrections have been made: but very few; and those only in the manner of expression, the sense of the Author still preserv'd entire.

The poem which first occurs, viz. that on reading Dr. Young's, was publish'd in St. James's Evening Post, Aug. 9. 1722. introduced by the following Letter to the Author of that paper,

SIR,

“ **E** NCLOSED you will find a noble present. I
 “ need not urge you to publish it; or say
 “ any thing to recommend it to your readers. No
 “ body, I think, can be unmov'd at such a poem.
 “ Such a delicacy of sentiment, so beautifully ex-
 “ pressed, must give most agreeable emotions. I
 “ am sensible, it would be an additional pleasure
 “ to a fine spirit, to be inform'd, who it is that he
 “ cannot but love, and would fain thank, for so
 “ valuable an entertainment. But, notwithstand-
 “ ing the great benevolence I bear to the many
 “ that

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“ that may admire this performance, I would not
“ chagrin this one Gentleman, by forcing him from
“ the *dear retreat*, to which his modesty and mode-
“ ration have confin’d him. It may be, I shall in-
“ curr his displeasure, by going so far towards ex-
“ posing him to the hazard of a discovery, and
“ thereby to the trouble of receiving a multitude
“ of thanks for this piece, and solicitations for
“ more. But I must confess, I thought it criminal
“ to engross so much pleasure to myself, when I
“ had it in my power to spread so general a Satis-
“ faction amongst my countrymen. I am

Your humble Servant,

S. Lowe.

The order, in which I had studiously placed all the poems, happen’d to be neglected, or lost, whilst they were in the press. If it had been observ’d, that call’d, The Farewell to Love, would have immediately succeeded The Desperate, and consequently have been read after all on the like Subjects, (which, except Colin’s Advice, or Damon to Nisa, were early composures,) and have served as a proper introduction to all the rest; which are on Subjects the most serious and important, and would then have stood thus, viz.

The Appeal, Sin the greatest burden, The divided heart lamented, Spirits in prison, Blaming himself, Welcome Evening, On the death of a child, Another on the same occasion, On the death of Mrs. M. B. Epitaph for one of an advanc’d Age, God a consuming Fire, State of bondage, God not implacable, A funeral poem for three young men who perish’d in a Coal-mine taking fire, A poem occasion’d by the death of nine persons suf-
focated

located in a coal-mine, *The Unknown World*, On reading *Dr. Young* on the last day.

Thus the poem occasion'd by the death of nine, &c. being plac'd after the Funeral poem, composed to be sung before a Sermon occasion'd by the death of three who perished in a coal-mine, to which it bears reference in its composition, would have been better understood.

I confess myself apprehensive, that two or three of the poetical performances may by some be thought liable to censure, and therefore to require an apology for the author, or publisher, if not for both.

As to the author, it must be owned, and the candid reader will consider, that they were juvenile, and not be too severe in his remarks; but make such equitable allowances as he may see occasion for. That, on a Lover's name and his Mistress's on a pew-door, was the thought of a School-boy. That called, *Theron and Amanda*, might follow at some distance of time. What I have entituled, *The Desperate*, as expressive of the Character of the person who speaks in it, bearing date, *Exon 1714*, was probably the last of this kind; one only excepted, for a reason that will presently appear. After this he wrote his *Farewel to Love*. And he inserts it in a letter to his friend, (of April 2. 1719,) whom he cautions against an extravagant love of the creature, and advises to regulate his passions, and bring them within due bounds, modestly confessing what he thought of with regret in his own case. And elsewhere he puts the same person, as I suppose, in mind, That "the supreme love is God's unalienable right, and sacred prerogative; and the onely way to have from a creature all that a creature can yield, is to place it in a due subordination to God the great fountain-head."

There is also a Letter from the author to the late Reverend Mr. John Mason, in answer to one received from

from that worthy and pious Gentleman, wherein mention appears to have been made of a certain poem read with pleasure, and a sollicitation for others of a different kind, and wishes that they were made as publick, as now they are. It will be to my purpose, with therefore, I crave leave here to transcribe some lines of it, which are these, viz. “ I wonder’d to hear, the trifle of
“ *Damon and Nisa* was come to your hands. I
“ did not think, it was rambl’d so far. How came
“ you to know, it was mine? You might well e-
“ nough wonder, how I came to ramble out of my
“ province so much. All the Excuse I have is the
“ plain truth, viz. That I could not tell how to
“ avoid it, and that it was contrary to my Inclina-
“ tions, who had *done with those things a great*
“ *while ago*, and never touch’d upon them but this
“ once; no not so much as by an *Epithalamium* on
“ my own happy marriage; and this at the request
“ of young Gentleman, who was the *Damon*, and
“ wou’d take no denial. I hope it is innocent. Yet
“ I may say, when I have any vein for versifying,
“ *Majora canamus.* ”

What ever genius the Author might have for compositions of the gay kind; he has given full proof, that he well knew how to check and controul it, and that, according to the profession he made to his friend, he was far from a purpose, or inclination to multiply such exercises, as may serve, indeed, for diversion, and amusement; which in season may be proper, and beautiful; but are not so closely connected, as other things, with the main business of life. He hoped, that what he had done in that way was innocent: but there were nobler subjects, to which he had long been devoted. He could say,

“ My

“ My soul disdains that little snare,
 “ The tangles of *Amira's* hair :
 “ Thine arms, my GOD, are sweeter bands, nor
 [can my heart remove.
 Watts, Horæ Lyr.

This in short, is the language of the Farewell to Love.

Let others, after his example, observe, and reflect upon the various, and usual working of the passions in human breasts, with relation to objects insufficient to satisfy, and render happy the reasonable nature : Let them well consider how mortals, for want of a due regulation of them, are toss'd and hurried to and fro in wild perplexity and confusion, neglecting solid good which alone can fill the mind ; how languishing and disappointed lovers

Lament the hard fate of their lives,
 The billows that hang on their souls,
 The sorrows that choak up their hearts ; *
And how desperate they sometimes grow, and leap from the bank of life,
 Thro' showers of tears, and storms of woe,
 In streams of reeking blood they go ; †

Let others (I say) after his example, observe, and consider all this ; and let them review their own fond expectations, and disappointments from their fellow worms, and the things of this world ; and thence learn such a direction of their passions, and powers, as will, sooner or later, afford an abundant recompence for all the uneasiness and suffering, which may possibly, one way or other, be occasioned by it, in joys pure and refined, unspeakable and everlasting. And thus, they will

* *Damon to Nisa*, pag. 27, 28.

† *The Desperate*, p. 37.

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will be acted by such a spirit, as we find breathing in the Farewel to Love, and the rest of the divine poems, wherein the Author speaks in his own person and character,

Now to the round of mortal joys,
May all my ardent passions die !

Kind, condescending Deity,
Behold thy wanderer return :
Once for the creature, now for Thee
In flames of fiercest love I burn.

I own, dear Lord, it was unjust,
To think a passion so divine
Was kindled for the fairest dust,
Which by prerogative was thine.

Thy beauty, O unchanging God,
Shall all my future hours employ ;
Nor *Lucia*, that poor snowy clod,
Shall taint the unpolluted joy.

Now to the world I'll tell and prove,
What worthless things these beauties be :
Now, if I ever die for love,
It shall be, LORD, for love of Thee *.

If the publication of those few poems be supposed to need a defence ; what I have to offer is the state of the case, as follows,

There being different sentiments as to the expediency of permitting them to pass with the rest, I came into theirs who questioned it : But upon farther consideration

B

* Farewel to Love, pag. 25, 26.

ration and advice, after I had happened to turn my eye upon those passages but now recited in a Letter to Mr. Mason, I sent them placed, as has been said already, viz. before, The Farewel to Love, and the divine poems, to a Gentleman in London, whom I thought a much better judge than my self, referring that, and other matters to his determination. But by some accidents, which I could not foresee, or prevent at this distance, the design fail'd; and the Gentlemen into whose hands the papers came, by a secondary direction, did not think fit to separate them.

I have owned what I myself dislike, to be the order in which they now appear. But I am so sensible, there are such various ways of thinking amongst all sorts of people, the judicious and candid, who deserve most regard, not excepted, that I expect, after all I have said, to be blamed upon different foundations: by some for needing an Apology; and by others for making it when there was no need of it; and by a third sort, perhaps, for making an insufficient one. In regard to the first of these, whether in the right or mistaken, I have offered simple truth; which if it be not sufficient, as I myself think it, is however my best, and all I can find in my heart to make use of on the present, or any other occasion.

I would in my conduct give no just offence to any, and be loth needlessly to draw on myself the censures even of those, who, in the unanimous opinion of their neighbours, are of such capacities and dispositions, as better qualify them to be noisy and clamorous, than to give, or take a reason. But, as I hope, their applauses would not puff me up, I do not conceive I am in danger of being too much dejected by any thing they can say. My chief concern is to approve myself to GOD, and my own conscience, and next to the more
considerate

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considerate part of mankind, whilst endeavouring to be any way useful.

I am conscious of an honest, and laudable design in publishing this collection, both of Poems and Letters, of the valuable person deceased; the great thing I have in view being the same, which I professed in my Preface to the Sermon occasioned by his death, and the Memoirs of his Life, viz. "The advancement of pure and undefiled religion, true substantial piety and goodness, and a conversation becoming the gospel." And I am well satisfied in my own mind, as to the aptness of the means, whatever the success be.

Upon the whole matter, I hope here is nothing justly offensive; and that in the perusal of these papers an honest and ingenious reader may be entertain'd with pleasure and advantage. Every one must judge for himself; but should be careful to pass a righteous and impartial judgment. And none should be censurers, till they have been readers.

If I have been any way injurious, or trespass'd any rule of decency, either to the dead or living; or fail'd in the discharge of the trust reposed in me by those, who put the Letters into my hands; it is unknown to me, and not owing to the want of a particular care to avoid it. I can perceive no room for just complaint of making private affairs publick, and troubling the World with them: tho' it must be own'd, that in things of this nature, as well as in the Memoirs of any one's life, some facts, occasions, and references must sometimes appear necessary to serve the design proposed. But I should be sorry to have any observ'd to be inserted here, which ought to have been suppress'd, at least as impertinent.

It will be a satisfaction to me, if I know that what is here expos'd to publick view proves to be acceptable, and useful to any. I do not expect it should be so to all,

all, who have a sight of it. But they who are not pleased, have no reason to judge, any more than to envy those that are.

Whoever shall be at the pains to peruse the Letters, may easily be persuaded of the justness of an observation made by a Gentleman, upon reading over the originals of these, and others, (which could not be brought into the compass of this Volume,) and thus express'd in a Letter, with which he favour'd me, viz. " I find " a vein of piety generally running through them. " He (the writer) appears in them to be one greatly affected with a sense of his frailty, and mortality; and frequently attempts to comfort himself, and his friends, with a consideration of the happiness, and glory of the future world, prepared for all saints and pious sufferers here. " Whatever subjects he writes of, he rarely forgets " to say somewhat that relates to the brevity of " human life, to the uncertainty, instability, and " changeableness of the present world, and of the " afflictive state of most here. But then he commonly breaths heaven before he concludes his " lines; and neglects not to offer his friends some " serious and salutary advice, before he subscribes " his name."

To obviate an objection, that may be raised from certain passages in some of the Letters, which appear to me only the expressions of an heroick piety, it must be consider'd, that a person frequently conversing with the other World, and keeping a constant eye upon the glorious rewards of it, may both say, and do that, which to an ordinary christian may have the air of extravagance.

The proof here given of the excellent spirit of the Author, whose name was cast out as evil, may, it is to be hoped, serve to enlarge the Charity of some, who have confin'd it to people of their own particular sentiments,

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ments, and been apt to consider those who differ from them as the enemies of GOD, and CHRIST; tho' indeed they profess, and have the utmost veneration for both; and if it does not, may leave them the more inexcusable.

These pious remains have the best improvement made of them, if they serve to fire us all with a noble ambition to live suitable to the dignity, and seek the perfection and happiness of our natures.

Having so great a cloud of witnesses gone before us, may we refrain our feet from every evil way, and lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily besets us, and run with patience the race that is set before us! Looking unto Jesus, the great author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of GOD!

N. B.

Astwick,
April 19, 1729.



ERRATA.

PREF. Page vi. line 11 for *jection* r. *objection*, p. vii. l. 5, for *with* r. *and*, p. 3. l. 2, after *soul*, for , r. . l. 3, 4, 5, for the *notes of admiration*, r. *comma's*, p. 5. l. 10, after *fall*, r. , p. 6. l. 20, after *cries*, for . r. , p. 7. l. 9, after *frowns*, for . r. ! l. 31, after *theme*, r. , p. 8. l. 5, after *sound*, for , r. ! p. 10. l. 4, for *advanced*, r. *advanced*, p. 11. l. 14, after *farewell*, for . r. , l. 15, for *all*, r. *ought*, l. 16, after *be*, for . r. : l. 17, after *shore* for . r. , p. 12. l. 13, after *below*, for . r. , l. 14, after *know*, for . r. ; p. 13. l. 7, for *surpize* r. *surprize*, p. 15. l. 20, for *the*, r. *thee*. p. 19. l. 8, after *GOD*, for . r. ; p. 20. l. 5, for *said*, r. *sad*. l. 9 & 12, dele the *Crotchets*, p. 24. l. 2, after *ray*, for . r. , l. 15. *wanton's*, dele' p. 25. l. 1, after *love*, for . r. , p. 28. l. 10, for *truths*, r. *truth*. after *rely*, for . r. : p. 33. l. 14, after *No* r. , p. 34. l. 6, for *past and*, r. *past joys*, and, l. 12, for *fear* r. *tear*, l. 24, for *Heav'd* r. *Heav'n*, p. 35. l. 28, for *devouted* r. *devoted*, p. 36. l. 4, for *That* r. *That's*, l. 29, for *rash* r. *rush*, p. 37. l. 7, for *ad* r. *and*, ib. after *away* r. : p. 38. l. 3, after *vail* dele ! ib. for *thab* r. *than*, p. 40. l. 18, for *said* r. *sad*, l. 21, for *bear* r. *bear*, p. 43. l. 8, for *oft* r. *off*, p. 44. l. 10, of *Peter's* r. *off Peter's*, l. 37, for *porion* r. *portion*, p. 48. l. 20, for *father* r. *fathers*, p. 49. l. 18, after *least* r. , l. 21, for *salsely* r. *falsely*, p. 50. l. 29, for *Force* r. *Forse*, l. 21, after *any*, for , r. ; p. 56. l. 18, for *would* r. *world*, l. 13, for *nor* r. *not*, p. 57. l. 2, for *wherein* r. *wherewith*, p. 60. l. 16, after *live*, for . r. ? l. 35, after *another's* r. , p. 63. l. 32, for *I and* r. *And I*.



A
P O E M
O N T H E
D E A T H

Of the Late REVEREND

Mr. HUBERT STODDON.

THE vulgar herds may undistinguish'd die,
And grov'ling souls in dark oblivion lie ;
The miser strive on gold to graft his fame,
And *Parian* tombs attempt to hide his shame;
Patrician fools in statues may survive,
And serve mankind as much as when alive ;
The savage hero hunt for fame in fight,
At once the world's great terror, and delight,
Pursue ambition thro' a scene of blood,
And gloss his vices with his country's good :
The haughty prætor, tympany of power,
The dread of fools, and idol of an hour,

Swoln

(xvi)

Swoln up with office, big with civil sway,
May catch applause, and triumph for a day ;
The coward muse does homage at his nod,
And lift the pigmy to a petty god,
Heroic deeds in lying strains express,
And robe th' oppressor in a patriot's dress,
Burn incense to his ignorance and pride,
And strive with fame his villanies to hide ;
While the brib'd stanzas his successors raise,
Astonish vertue, blaspheme truth with praise :
Such ways may momentary heroes prize,
With such frail borrow'd plumes attempt to rise ;
Thus abject souls may try to build renown,
And make the spacious field of time their own.
My humble muse a nobler praise shall give,
And no polluted character receive ;
Great *Stogdon's* fame wants no such aids to rise,
Her native stature mixes with the skies ;
His noble soul shall in true light appear,
No gilding arts can be of service here :
What lustre can enrich the diamond's rays,
Or dress the god of day in stronger blaze ?
His worth will immortality command,
Without the poet's, or the sculptor's hand.
What tho' no pile acknowledges his name,
Nor wounded stone deliver out his fame ?
What tho' no emblems do his reliques grace,
Nor bustos strive to imitate his face ?
What tho' he liv'd retir'd from vulgar crowds,
Like glitt'ring *Phæbus* swallow'd up in clouds ?
He *Phœnix*-like shall from his ashes rise,
And wrap his head within the lofty skies ;
His works a nobler monument shall raise,
And crown his brows with everlasting bays,
His sacred numbers never shall expire,
But triumph when the earth is wrapt in fire.

(xvii)

When paintings perish, medals waste in rust,
When annals die, and statues turn to dust,
Celestial bards his tuneful notes shall sing,
And seraphs to them sweep the sounding string.
ô! could I flow like thee, I'd mix my lays
With soft compassion and majestic praise;
Such tender notes should issue from my tongue,
As in the groves thy love-sick *Damon* sung.
Whene'er his complaints afflict the list'ning ear;
Our bosoms heave, our eyes bestow a tear,
We bear his woes, we for his anguish mourn,
And catch the soft infection in our turn.
When *Nisa's* charms thy flowing verse recite,
We feel her beauties growing on our sight:
So just each stroke, so bright each feature shines,
The queen of love emerges from his lines:
Warm with poetic life her beauties rise,
And give a real *Venus* to the eyes.
But when the swelling trumpet's awful blast,
Declares that nature's final doom is past;
When earth's strong pillars at their basis shake,
And everlasting mountains hear and quake,
How bold the poet sings, what scenes he draws;
With what fierce images his reader awes?
The fainting mortal feels his fire so strong,
Such force of majesty attends his song,
He bends, he sinks beneath the mighty load,
And wishes for the cooling episode.
What horror strikes us when th' arch-angels rise,
"And with loud crackling noise fold back the skies?"
When heaven's eternal King, from fields of light,
On hell's dark mansions pours his piercing sight;
Our blood runs cold, and pale our faces turn,
"To see his eye-balls sparkle, and old *Tophet* burn,
Thrice happy bard! in whom at once were join'd
A lofty genius, and a vertuous mind.

(xviii)

The sons of wit, the souls of *Phæbean* fire,
Are slaves to lust, and captives to desire:
The blackest crimes their bright perfections foil,
As rankest weeds spring in the richest soil.
In thy poetick flowers no serpent glides,
No venom waits, no gay destruction hides.
In all thy flights pure wit with vertue shines;
No sweet perdition lodges in thy lines.
Thy language chaste, as *Watts's* diction flows,
And *Cowley's* wit thy lively fancy shows:
The *Roman* judgment in thy subjects shines,
The fire of *Milton* flashes in thy lines.
Great *Addison's* smooth numbers grace thy song,
His force and harmony flow from thy tongue.
My heart exults, my soul is all on fire;
Hark! *Pope's* melodious fingers shake the lyre.
Thou god of verse! thou bright *Apollo's* son,
Thy father's strength and majesty's thy own.
Who shall attend thee in the rolls of fame?
Thy like in shape, thy like in soul and flame.
Such *Stogdon* was without the laxer part,
The humane foibles clinging round thy heart.
So just his life in every part appear'd:
So strict the vertue that his actions steer'd:
So aw'd by reason's and religion's laws,
Envy fate mute, and gave him dumb applause.
His charity was boundless as the main,
Whose gen'rous arms each spreading realm contain:
It held all nations in its fond embrace,
And grasp'd all nature like unbounded space.
Religion dwelt within his sacred breast,
A darling friend and amicable guest,
From fiery zeal, from cold indifference free,
Brim-full of love and void of bigotry:
Alike the pole, alike the burning zone
To the sweet candour of his soul unknown.

So pure his life, so fierce his flaming love,
 He vied in piety with saints above.
 His soul continually in rapture rode
 On wings of warm devotion to his God.
 The seraphim with wonder gaz'd to see
 A mind so pure, from human dregs so free,
 A mind as bright as sparks of heavenly fire,
 And thoughts as pure as cherubim's desire.
 Had all the wealth *Peruvian* mountains keep,
 Had all the treasures hoarded in the deep,
 Had all the gems that burn in *Indian* mines,
 Or glory that in earthly triumph's shines,
 Joyn'd in one mighty bribe to gain his heart,
 To make him from his dear-lov'd vertue part,
 To shake the honest vigour of his soul,
 He'd stood unmov'd and steady as the pole.
 The gaudy grandeur of th' ambitious great,
 Their shining honours and their gilded state,
 Their swelling titles, and their haughty birth,
 Their noisy revels, and insipid mirth,
 Were golden sopperies he ne'er admir'd,
 Alike with state, alike with nonsense tir'd.
 The great man's smiles, the vulgar's frowns were born,
 With equal innocence and equal scorn:
 To catch their empty praise he never sought,
 Nor with a fawning cringe their favours bought,
 Rais'd in himself, he triumph'd o'er his fate,
 And in sublimity of soul was truly great.
 He taught mankind t'eschew the paths of sin,
 And drink the streams of pure religion in.
 Eternal eloquence flow'd from his tongue,
 And nervous reason from his topics sprung.
 Adorn'd with all the charms, and force of phrase
 That still our pleasure and our wonder raise.
 With easy wit so just he'd paint the times,
 The foes of vertue laugh'd at their own crimes;

With keenest satyr vice's favourites wound,
 And throw their baffled systems to the ground ;
 Against their vaunts with reason's batteries rise,
 While deep-mouth'd judgment all its force applies.
 The dark *Tartarian* gulph is now his theme,
 Smother'd with smoke, and wrapt in livid flame ;
 Where hope ne'er comes, and torments ever dwell,
 And black despair inflames the burning cell :
 A frowning GOD darts terrors from above,
 A GOD array'd in vengeance, once of love.
 His trembling lips the awful truths repeat,
 The guilty sinner's pulse forgets to beat :
 Amaz'd he stands and impotent with fears,
 While the big horror thunders in his ears,
 Consigns himself to heaven, implores his GOD,
 T'accept his tears, and wave th'impending rod.
 Now manly eloquence reveals to fight
 Cælestial glories, and immortal light.
 The field of life he sets before our eyes ;
 Vertue the race, and heaven the glorious prize,
 With strongest reasons moves us to pursue ;
 Himself preceptor, and example too.
 So pleasingly his well turn'd periods warm,
 Vertue from him receives new power to charm :
 He draws the cheating mirror from our sight,
 And shows th' angelic maid in native light ;
 Daughter of heaven, bright off-spring of the skies,
 To whom my very soul in raptures rise,
 Religion borrows all her charms from thee,
 Her heavenly beauties, and divinity.
 Before she was, thy essence was the same,
 Th' eternal offspring of th' Eternal Flame :
 She'll feel destruction in the final doom,
 But thou shalt flourish in immortal bloom.
 Let hot enthusiasts in their lust of zeal
 To all the monsters of their brain appeal ;

(xxi)

With solemn folly, and religious cant,
Prove every vapour, and phantastic rant:
The movings of divinity within,
And struglings of the deity with sin:
Virtue consists not in a waking dream,
Or rampant fallacy of the purple stream:
She feels no joys but what right reason brings,
And all her rapture from just action springs.
This was the virtue, that inspir'd his soul,
The heavenly energy, that mov'd the whole.
These bright perfections did not shine alone;
For all the demy-virtues were his own;
The social charms that link the human mind,
And lead in sweet captivity mankind.
His wit was lively, and his language chaste,
With soft address, and sweetest action grac'd.
In humour pleasant, and in action grave,
In temper gentle, yet in danger brave;
When death attack'd him with his tort'ring train,
And all his subtle instruments of pain,
He view'd the final glass, and tyrant's dart,
And smiling bid him dip it in his heart.
He saw the direful glutton's ghastly mirth,
Pleas'd with the luscious bait of dying earth:
His eager prayers the lazy sand provoke;
His eager soul petitions for the stroke.
Thus ripe for bliss he forc'd the feeble clay,
Shook off mortality, and shot away.
So purest Ether struggles still to rise,
And with impatient instinct seeks the skies.
O! how shall I thy woful loss deplore?
Thy excellence but makes our sorrows more.
Robb'd of the world's chief ornament in thee,
From earthly things thy death hath set us free;
We pant, and long to reach the seats on high,
And taste the pleasures of thy native sky.

No

No more shall we with rapture hear thy song,
 Or catch enchantment dropping from thy tongue;
 No more our reason pleasingly submit,
 To the sweet charms of thy persuasive wit;
 Our souls no more transported by thy strains,
 Trickle in pleasure thro' the mazy veins;
 Cut off in thee abortive numbers sleep,
 Silence, and death the pleasing magic keep.
 Come all his friends, and o'er his ashes weep,
 One sad eternal funeral vigil keep:
 Such heavy strokes will not permit relief,
 Excessive loss demands excessive grief.
 You know his worth, and let it be your boast;
 Your grief exceeds, because you knew him most.
 Assemble all who *Pindus* shades adore,
 Your president of wit and verse deplore;
 With cypress garlands dress your drooping head,
 In doleful dirges mourn the sacred dead.
 Who'll now chastize the errors of your song?
 Teach the poetic stream to glide along;
 In rapid numbers roll th' impetuous tide,
 Or the smooth notes in easy motions guide.
 Cou'd vertue, wit, good sense, or genius save
 A dying hero from the hungry grave;
 Cou'd wishes, prayers, or beauteous tears prevail
 With fate to ballance the descending scale;
 Dear *Stogdon's* presence still had blest our sight,
 Improv'd our joys, and taught us new delight.
 Had *Orpheus* ever past th' oblivious tide,
 And with his strains redeem'd the captive bride;
 Cou'd magick numbers bribe the powers beneath;
 His lyre had triumph'd over fate and death.
 But ah! no charms cou'd lay the tyrant's rage,
 And save the rising wonder of the age;
 No tears, nor prayers cou'd stretch his destin'd date,
 Or cancel the recorded writ of fate.

(xxiii)

In vain his other self implores his life,
With all the passions of a tender wife.
In vain her streaming eyes, and prayers, and tears;
He quits the earth, and gains the shining spheres.
The muse alone could see him mount the skies;
She close pursued him with poetic eyes.
She watch'd th' unsullied spirit up the road;
And saw the joyful seraphs round him crowd,
With loud hosanna's guide him to the shore,
Where storms ne'er beat, nor angry tempests roar;
Where no low cares the cup of bliss alloy,
Infect the draught, and damp the sparkling joy;
Where real pleasure spreads her downy wings,
And every thought a holy transport brings:
There mix'd with heroes, gods and kings, he reigns,
And adds new lustre to the *Elizian* plains.



In vain his other self implores his life,
 With all the passions of a tender wife,
 In vain her streaming eyes and sobs and tears
 He quits the earth, and gains the shining spheres.
 The male alone could see him mount the skies;
 She clots pursued him with poet's eyes.
 She watch'd the unobscured light up the road,
 And saw the joyful steps round him crowd,
 With fond embraces, guide him to the shore,
 Where storms of grief and rage tempests roar;
 Where now cures the cup of this alloy,
 And the draught, and damps the sparkling joy;
 Where real pleasure gleams but in my wings,
 And every thought a holy flame brings;
 I am mix'd with heroes, gods and kings, he reigns,
 And adds new lustre to the African plains.



(1)



P O E M S

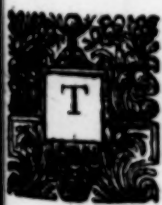
Of the Late REVEREND

Mr. Hubert Stogdon.

*Some Thoughts on reading Dr. Young's Poem
on the Last Day, in a Letter to Mrs. R--e.*

Ashwick, Aug. 25. 1718.

Madam,



HERE are sweet seasons, when the mind
[puts on
More serious thoughts, and loves to be
[alone:
Collects herself, and proves the happy
[means

'Twixt gloom and laughter, vanity and spleen:

A

Calla

Calls in her salient airs, abates her fires,
 Leaves to th' unthinking herd their vain desires,
 Looks round, and smiles, and sighs, and so retires. }
 Retires, but where? For in such hours as these
 'Tis not meer sun-shine, or meer shade can please.
 Too sad the grotto, and too vain the day;
 The night too gloomy, and the sun too gay.
 Where can a soul retire, what refuge find,
 To suit such delicacy of the mind?
 Kind Heav'n has blest me with a dear retreat,
 Too tender for description, yet too great:
 So soft the shade, so reverend the grove,
 One must be all religion, or all love.
 Here bending alders bending alders greet,
 Obsequious branches mingle as they meet,
 (Emblems of rarer friendship) how they're twin'd,
 Whom social bloom and social sufferings bind!
 In spite of autumn blasts, and winter storms,
 They grow, and flourish in each other's arms;
 So firm th' alliance, and th' embrace so true
 The stroke that parts 'em, must destroy them too;
 While gently the young curling tendrils play,
 Whisper, and nod, and beckon all the day.
 'Tis here a solemn arch corrects the rays,
 Screens off the gaudy lustre, and allays, }
 And sweetly tempers the fierce noon-day blaze.
 Such shades, 'methinks, e'en consecrate the ground,
 And cast an awful sanctity around!
 Yet some fair beams of virgin light appear,
 Like sparkling diamonds glittering here and there,
 Shedding their milder glories down: — but stay, }
 Where am I rov'd? I only meant to say,
 Here I read YOUNG, and thought on the last day. }
 Those hours, good God! those last important hours
 Shoot to my heart, and rally all my powers.
 Hope, fear, dread, joy, doubt, longing, and surprize,
 Terror, and gladness all at once arise,

And with joint force like blended currents roll,
 And deluge ev'ry region of my soul,
 Rocks rending ! roaring oceans ! shrieking fears !
 Thunders, and bursting tombs, and shatt'ring
 [spheres,

Groans ! noise, and rattling clangors stun my ears. }

I see th'establish'd hills about me quake,

I feel earth's fundamental pillars shake.

'Tis all dissolv'd ; 'tis loosned all around !

And lab'ring earthquakes heave the trembling ground.

The frightful shock in *Britain* first began,

And rent through all the kingdoms to *Japan*,

Clave through the tott'ring *Alps*, and as it flew

Whole chains of mountains at a run o'erthrew.

Unable these dire ruins to redress

I see pale nature in her last distress,

With drooping charms amidst the chaos pine,

And all her glories in the wreck resign.

Two mighty angels cloath'd in white array,

Just now commission'd to prepare the way,

For the descending triumph, swiftly fly,

And tear the gaudy hangings of the sky ;

Which full through threescore centuries they wore ;

But now adorn the ruin'd earth no more.

A spacious chasm like heav'n's grand entrance, wide,

And two vast folding doors on either side

Flew open nine degrees, full zenith high,

While both archangels with each other vie,

And each with crackling noise rolls back the sky, }

Lord ! what a tide of fearful glory roll'd,

Burning and fierce like seas of melted gold,

Pouring at once upon my feeble sight

Rivers of joy, and cataracts of light !

Yet the sweet streaming pleasure, issuing thence,

Strengthen'd and clarified my visual sense.

I dar'd to gaze once more, I gaz'd and saw,

Heav'ns advance-guard their burning robes draw.

Twelve legions these, behind them myriads more,
 Soft vehicles of brilliant Ether wore ;
 Not armed for battle now, no dreadful light
 From hostile helms gleam'd formidably bright :
 But all like victors hymn'd a joyous song,
 Wav'd high their palms, and pass'd in pomp along.
 Chariots of state in endless order stand,
 All ready harness'd, waiting the command,
 Each of one single gem, by art divine
 The wheels are polish'd, and the axles shine.
 Beams shoot thro' beams, and crossing rays with
 Blend subtly, and reflect a various blaze. [rays,
 Dominions, powers, and chiefs sit next the throne,)
 Robed for the day with all their cor'nets on, }
 Waiting the signal too, and longing to be gone. }
 Hark ! the glad trumpet sounds th' eternal King, }
 Bids ev'ry faint touch ev'ry tender string, }
 And all th' harmonious seraphs soft recorders sing. }
 Anon a full-blown clarion swells the sound,
 While stronger levets from the hills rebound,
 And bolder martial musick thunders all around. }
 Shouting the armies move in dread array, }
 " A GOD, a GOD, ye light'nings clear the way, }
 " And grace th' immense transactions of the day. }
 He comes ! but o ! the beams are too intense,
 Th' insufferable glory drowns my sense -
 In floods of over-pow'ring excellence.
 'Tis all unspeakable — no more I dare !
 I'll stop my fault'ring lame description there,
 Nor aim to utter what I cannot bear. }
 E'en YOUNG himself recoils, and dreads to view
 Th' amazing scene he promis'd to pursue.
 He felt it arduous labour as he wrought,
 And sweats sometimes beneath the stress of thought,
 Jealous he aims, and cautiously aspires,
 'Till loaded with the pond'rous theme he tires,

And almost owns the images too strong,
 And shows he could not bear a rapture long.
 So struggles a young prophet, so oppress'd,
 When the first inspiration fills his breast;
 So trembles at the unknown extacy,
 And starts at the first movings of a Deity;
 While the old seer, us'd to such strong delight,
 Can bear transporting visions all the night.
 Not so as yet our Bard; but bold and wise,
 High as was safe to fall he dares to rise.
 When a strong impulse threatens the Poet's brain,
 How warily he checks the obedient rein!
 The stagg'ring muse he tenderly unloads,
 And gently breaths her in cool episodes.
 He knew, when thoughts are moderately worn,
 And the poetick fire is loath to burn,
 Th' advantage of digression and return;
 That when the sickning rhapsodies decline,
 He yet might seem to check 'em with design.
 Half the last trump th' advent'rous Bard reveals,
 But then the angel prudently conceals.
 For, if he lavish'd here, where should he find
 Splendour enough for all the pomp behind?
 Like a wise master in these thrifty arts,
 He breaks his labour into various parts;
 Well knows, and handsomly avoids the pain
 Of driving on in an unbroken strain.
 Th' advantage of beginning saves the sense,
 Helps on the work, yet lessens the expense.
 We don't expect a *Preface* should surprize,
 Canto's like bells must have their time to rise;
 Tune briskly on a little while, and then,
 As peals are us'd to do, cease down again.
 Two noble columns eminently shine,
 As seraphs well could paint, or *Luke* design.
 Here 'tis the Poet burns with heav'nly fire;
 And here *Urania* did indeed inspire.

Here

Here the blest maid did gen'rously impart
 The strength of genius, and the blaze of art.
 When he unfurl'd the flag ; she still was there,
 And waved the christian banner in the air.
 She (Heav'ns 'twas she !) that vig'rous colour shed,
 And dy'd the standard with so deep a red.
 She ting'd the bleeding cross, " that pour'd a stain
 " Wheree'r it flow'd, on earth, or air, or main ;
 " That flush't the hills, and set on fire the wood,
 " That turn'd the deep dy'd ocean into blood.
 " O formidable glory ! dreadful bright !
 " Oh stay *Urania*, stay thy hasty flight ;
 Nor leave the Bard so soon — Alas ! 'tis o'er,
 He swoons ! He dies, and can sustain no more.
 The goddess was resolv'd indeed to see,
 If he could bear the whole Divinity.
 She tries, and finds a moment more was death ;
 So kindly leaves him to recover breath.
 In pity to her Votary she flies,
 He trembling still 'twixt joy and terror cries.
 " 'Tis more than meer mortality can bear !
 Then calm and undisturb'd concludes in prayer.
 Tir'd with the glorious toil, he leaves the stage,
 A warning to the Poets of the age,
 That none may sacrifice his muse in vain
 To what no single genius can sustain.
 But if you'd build an Epic, that shall last
 Home to the awful trumpet's rising blast ;
 Whose period shall the forewarn'd Judgment bring,
 And perish only in the flames you sing ;
 That the last ages, as they read in you
 Nature's last agonies, may see 'em too ;
 Mingle your different glories in th' essay,
 Unite your labours, and divide the day.
 Great ADDISON, assist the vast design ;
 And in unrival'd numbers sing the time,

When

When rocks shall melt, the boiling sea shall roar,
 The glories of thy own CAMPAIGN be o'er,
 And BLENHEIM's stately dome shall be no more. }

Be't thy peculiar labour to prepare
 The grand tribunal blazing in the air.
 Describe th' incarnate God enthron'd above,
 The flashings of his wrath, and beamings of his love,
 When he shows round the tokens of his wounds,
 How sweet he smiles, how awfully he frowns.
 Tell how he shines propitious on the good,
 The travel of his soul, the purchase of his blood.
 Say, how they joy and glory in his fight;
 Bask in his beams, and glitter in his light:
 How to the shiv'ring croud at length he turns,
 His eye-balls sparkle, and old *Tophet* burns.

STANDEN, with charming airs, and lovely grace,
 Just in his thoughts, and happy in address,
 Shall greet the rising saints, and sweetly sing,
 How well-rewarded martyrs hail their King;
 Range all the thrones in regular array,
 And aid the ceremonies of the day.

WATTS has a soul elaborately wrought,
 Command of diction, and a flow of thought.
 With ease he kindles love, or flashes fire,
 And leads our passions captive to his lyre.
 He weeps and but too well we feel his woe,
 While tears like his own mournful numbers flow.
 Joy, like a sudden trance, breaks through his strains,
 Plays round our hearts, and springs thro' all our veins.
 When to grave *Allimans* he forms his voice,
 And Judgment is the theme we still rejoyce.
 But oh! like his own consecrated strings,
 Rejoyce with trembling, as the Poet sings.
 Silence, thou noisy world, your cares suspend,
 A while ye busy sons of men attend.
 Solemn and dreadful, as the Angel swore,
 Hark! *Watts* proclaims, that TIME SHALL BE NO MORE.

Hear

Hear his prophetick lines your doom foretell
 And sentence the whole world to Heav'n or Hell.
 And oh what joy must kindle in that breast,
 Whom Christ the righteous Judge pronounces blest!
 But at the word *DEPART* (*tormenting sound,*)
 Ah what a doleful groan will bellow all around!
WATTS would describe the rapture, and despair;
 And tell, what thoughts and shrieks will eccho there,
 Could he sustain, or seas'nably controul
 Th' impatient fallies of his panting soul.
 But when he sees the saints, and views the throne,
 And speaks of joys so great to be his own,
 Fir'd at the thought he'd burst the feeble clay,
 Rush through the tott'ring walls, and fly away.

On the Death of a Child.

I.

How sweet was the surprize!
 (The thought th' imagination warms,)
 When Angels bid the infant joy,
 And claspt him in their arms!

II.

He felt another kind of life,
 And found he was new born,
 As bright and vigorous as the sun,
 And blooming as the morn.

III.

Upwards they bear him to the skies;
 The stars beneath his feet.
 All with the talk of heav'nly joys
 The ravish'd stranger greet.

IV. But

IV.

But when the pearly gates they saw,
 " We're come, (they cry'd) we're come !
 " Earth was but a short inn to you ;
 " But this must be your home.

V.

And now the full grown soul perceiv'd,
 Why his new powers were given ;
 And sung the grace, that brought him safe
 The nearest way to Heaven.

VI.

He (happy soul!) returns no more.
 Let us prepare to go ;
 And sing with him, who only stay'd
 To weep with us below.

On the Death of Mrs. *Mary Billingsley*, Oct.
 23, 1726. in the 20th Year of her Age.

Weep not for me.

I.

DEAR friends, farewell, your hurrying life I try'd
 A while, but soon grew sick of it, and dy'd.
 Could you but think half what we saints enjoy ;
 You'd long for a release to follow me.

II.

Then waste no tears on me, but if you do ;
 I'll own the sympathy, and pity you.

B

Not

Not for your globe would I return again,
 To that poor wilderness of beasts and men;
 But wish you safely thro' your threescore years and ten. }

An Epitaph, for a Person of an advaced age.

How strangely fond of life poor mortals be!
 Who that shall see this bed would change with me?
 Yet gentle reader, tell me which is best?
 The toilsome journey, or the trav'ler's rest.

**The UNKNOWN WORLD, occasioned by the
 hearing a passing Peal.**

I.

HARK! my gay friend, that solemn toll
 Speaks the departure of a soul:
 'Tis gone, that's all we know, but where,
 Or how the unbodied ghost does fare

II.

In that mysterious world, GOD knows,
 And GOD alone, to whom it goes;
 To whom departing souls return,
 To know their doom to shine, or burn.

III.

Ah by what glim'ring light we view
 The UNKNOWN WORLD we're hast'ning to!
 GOD has lock'd up the future age,
 And planted darkness round the stage.

IV. Wife

(II)

IV.

Wise Heav'n has made it all perplext,
And drawn 'twixt this life and the next
A dark impenetrable skreen,
And all behind is all unseen.

V.

We talk of Heav'n, and talk of hell :
But what they mean, no tongue can tell.
Heav'n is a place where angels are,
And hell of horrible despair.

VI.

But what these awful words imply,
None of us know before we die.
Whether we will or no, we must
Take the succeeding life on trust.

VII.

This Hour, suppose, our friend is well ;
Death-struck the next cries out *farewell*.
I die, and then, for all we see,
Ceases at once to breath and be.

VIII.

Thus launch'd from life's ambiguous shore.
Ingulph'd in death, appears no more ;
T' emerge where unseen ghosts repair,
In distant worlds, we know not where.

IX.

Spirits fly swift; perhaps 'tis gone
A thousand leagues beyond the sun,

Or twice ten thousand more twice told,
E'er the forsaken clay is cold.

X.

And yet who knows? the friends we lov'd,
Tho' dead, may'nt be so far remov'd,
Only this vail of flesh between,
Perhaps glide by us, tho' unseen.

XI.

While we their loss lamenting say,
" They're out of hearing far away;
Guardians to us perhaps they're there,
Conceal'd in vehicles of air.

XII.

And yet no notices they give,
Nor tell us where, or how they live;
Tho' conscious, while with us below.
How they themselves desir'd to know.

XIII.

As if bound up by solemn fate
To keep this secret of their state;
To tell their joys or pains to none,
That man might live by faith alone.

XIV.

Well, let my Sovereign if he please,
Lock up his marvellous decrees.
Why should I wish him to reveal
What he thinks proper to conceal?

XV.

It is enough that I believe,
 Heav'n's sweeter than I can conceive,
 That he who makes it all his care
 To serve God here, shall see him there.

XVI.

But oh, what worlds shall I survey,
 The moment that I leave this clay?
 How sudden the surprize! How new!
 God grant it may be happy too!

A Poem occasioned by the Death of nine
 Persons suffocated in a *Coal-mine*.

I.

OH how secure are thoughtless souls,
 Dissolv'd in carnal mirth!
 How can you slight such awful calls,
 Within an inch of death?

II.

" Oft have I spoken, " saith the Lord,
 " With an inviting voice.
 " Had those kind accents won your hearts,
 " Mercy was still my choice.

III.

" When urg'd to breath devouring fire,
 " I oft have quench'd it too,
 " When 'twas impatient to destroy :
 " What more could mercy do ?

IV. " While

IV.

- “ While anger burn’d, compassion still
“ Was kindled in my breast :
“ When forc’d to warn you by a few,
“ Mercy preserv’d the rest.

V.

- “ Ye prov’d my works, ye saw my ways,
“ My pity, power, and ire ;
“ When some I pluck’d like half-burnt brands,
“ Or tinder from the fire.

VI.

- “ But soon the short liv’d wonder dy’d,
“ And so I lost my end ;
“ Each chose his way ; tho’ well they knew,
“ I warn’d them to amend.

VII.

- “ Once more I sent my awful voice ;
“ It shook the conscious earth.
“ Oh what is man within the blast
“ Of my devouring breath !

VIII.

- “ Now I resolv’d to show my power,
“ And propagate my fear ;
“ To make ev’n distant sinners pray,
“ And tremble when they hear.

IX.

- “ Yet think not, they who felt that day
“ Were sinners more than you :
“ But learn what chaff you are, learn what
“ A jealous God can do.

X.

Ye living men, whom mercy spar'd,
 In trembling praise conspire:
 Fear him, who bears the dreadful name
 GOD a CONSUMING FIRE.

Blaming himself.

A Translation of an *Epigram* of Mr. Watts.
Horæ Lyricæ, Pag. 109.

Ah why so fond of life? what tempts thy stay,
 O Watts, in this degrading house of clay?
 Loaded with thousand ills thou'lt still complain,
 And faintly aim to rise, but (ah) in vain!
 The body gravitates to earth again.
 The seeds of sin float in th' arterial flood,
 And crimes lye brooding in thy youthful blood.
 Grief, pain, and love distract thy mind by turns.
 And passion like an inward fever burns.
 Satan that subtle foe embroils thy way,
 Lays snares unseen, and eyes thee as his prey.
 See! ev'ry star sollicit thee to come!
 Beckons and nods, and seems to call thee home!
 Think of departed saints, how blest they be!
 And how thy empty mansion groans for thee.
 See! Uriel waits, and his bright chorus sings;
 Official SERAPHS tender thee their wings:
 ALL HEAV'N does wish thy ling'ring voy'ge were o'er,
 Angels would joy to welcome thee to shore;
 JESUS invites, "Here here's thy only rest,
 "Come lean thy weary temples on my breast.

He

He must indeed his house of bondage love,
Whom earth nor hell, nor all the host above,
Seraphs nor stars, nor God himself can move. }

Spirits in Prison.

I.

Sick of this doleful life I groan,
And long to be at rest,
To lean my weary head, my Lord!
On thy refreshing breast.

II.

My inexpressible desires
Are only known to thee.
How gladly could I burst these walls,
And die for liberty!

III.

Oh! with what eager joy I'd tear
A passage to my heart,
Rend ev'ry nerve that holds it there
Unmindful of the smart;

IV.

If one such bloody pluck might end
For ever all my pains,
And send me to those joyous realms,
Where peace eternal reigns.

V.

Who would not venture one such pang
To gain immortal bliss,
Rather than bear the tiresome load
Of such a life as this?

VI. But

VI.

But one short agony and then
 All our sad struglings past :
 But oh ! how many throws has life ?
 And die we must at last.

VII.

Souls that are conscious of their birth,
 And think how spirits live,
 Feel daily somewhat worse than death,
 Or stupid souls conceive.

VIII.

Life is sore travel, and to breath
 Is but to gasp for breath :
 Laughter's a meer convulsion-fit,
 And frenzy is our mirth.

IX.

A gen'rous soul would scorn to live
 At this ignoble rate,
 Without this reconciling thought,
 That there's an after state.

X.

Now her keen thoughts can hardly bear
 To wait the live-long day ;
 Strangl'd in flesh, half-drown'd in blood,
 And muffled up in clay.

XI.

Ye happy minds, who never felt
 What we embodied must,
 Yet guess what fetter'd spirits feel,
 And souls choak'd up with dust.

C

XII. You

XII.

You fleet it free from sun to sun,
Or to the center dive :
Oh ! pity kindred minds in chains,
And souls interr'd alive.

XIII.

Tho' in these moving tombs confin'd,
We're all immortal too ;
Form'd all of empyreal light,
And the same fire with you.

XIV.

When death e'er long shall break these chains ;
Then from each mouldring clod
Shall spring so many rising suns,
Fair images of GOD.

XV.

Then shall we love, and sing, and shine
With native freedom blest ;
But oh ! eternity itself
Can only tell the rest.

The Divided Heart lamented.

I.

STRANGE that so much of Heav'n and hell
Should in one bosom meet !
Lord ! can thy spirit ever dwell
Where satan has a seat ?

II. Now

II.

Now I am all transform'd to love,
And could expire in praise ;
Anon, not all the joys above
One chearful note can raise.

III.

When I with pensive thoughts review
The mazes I have trod ;
Astonish'd at the grace that drew
My wand'ring soul to God.

IV.

Oh! with what ardent zeal I vow
To purify within ;
What indignation rises now
At the meer thought of sin !

V.

Yet vain amusements, hurrying cares,
Trifles of loss or gain,
Or carnal joys, or worldly fears
Seduce my heart again.

VI.

By faithless doubts, or golden dreams,
I'm tortur'd, or betray'd :
Still tost between the two extrems ;
Too vain, or too dismay'd.

VII.

Oh! my infatuated powers,
Awake, and watch, and pray :
For time whirls round the hasty hours,
To hurry me away.

VIII.

And, LORD, if this declining sun
Should prove the last to me,
And set before my work is done;
How fearful would it be?

IX.

'Tis said on the keen edge of death
To say, " I cannot tell
" Whether my last expiring breath
" Puffs me to heav'n or hell.

X.

[Unite me, Lord, to fear thy name,
I earnestly implore;
That hope and fear, doubt, guilt, and shame
Divide my heart no more.]

XI.

Decide the dubious awful case
By some assuring sign:
And oh! may thy all conquering grace
Demonstrate I am thine.

XII.

Rise sun of righteousness and shine,
Spring a celestial day;
That this benighted soul of mine
May praise, as well as pray.

XIII.

So the first dawn gleams thro' the night,
Till the bright sun arise,
And pours a flood of glorious light
O'er all the smiling skies,

A Funeral Poem,

Composed to be sung before a Sermon, occasioned by the Death of three young Men, who perished in a Coal-mine taking Fire,

I.

GREAT GOD of time and chance!
Disposer of our Days!
How awful is thy providence,
How fearful is thy praise!

II.

Thy Sov'reign power's the same
In heaven's vast realms on high,
And earth's dark caverns where unseen
The sulph'rous vapours lye.

III.

Rude rocks shall melt away
Beneath thy awful stroke.
Touch but the hills, and strait they burn;
The valleys, and they smoke.

IV.

O who can bear to stand
Before thy face, O LORD!
When air, and earth, and fire are arm'd
To execute thy word?

V.

Oh how should sinners fear
What thy right hand can do!
Speak but the word RETURN, they turn
To dust, and ashes too.

VI. We

VI.

We tread upon thy mines :

Oh let us walk in fear!

Thy hand can fire some hidden trains,

And blast us even here. *

VII.

Sinners! if once his wrath

Begins to smoke, beware!

Pray † now, lest he consume you all,

E'er you have time for prayer.

The Appeal.

I.

MY GOD, and am I not sincere?
Here feel my throbbing heart:
O how it panteth to draw near,
And see thee as thou ART?

II.

My bosom glows with subtle flame,
Sighs do but fan the fire;
It heaves, and trembles at thy name,
With an unknown desire.

III.

If I but hear thy name, I start;
Oh what must be thy face?
If I but say, " Think, Oh my heart,
" The joys of his embrace;

IV. I

* At Church.

† Sung immediately before Prayer.

IV.

I gush and feel my mass of blood
 Like boiling billows roll,
 And something swift as lightning wou'd
 Shoot thro' my very soul.

V.

Vows, promises, and prayers, and cries
 May feign, and prove untrue :
 But can these longings, and these sighs
 Prove false and treach'rous too ?

VI.

Nay then I know no other test,
 Must I my hopes resign ?
 Then never was an human breast
 So strangely false as mine.

VII.

But oh it is not so, I'm sure ;
 The thought is killing pain.
 And now I know, and feel 'tis more
 Than hypocrites can feign.

VIII.

Should'st thou, O searcher of my reins,
 Question it's faith to thee ;
 'Twould burn with agonies, and pains,
 And raging jealousy.

IX.

'Twould work, and labour, sweat and beat,
 It's loyalty to prove ;
 And spring towards thy judgment seat,
 To plead it's ardent love.

Farewell

Farewell to Love.

Honour to that diviner ray,
That first allur'd my eyes away
From ev'ry mortal fair.

Watts Horæ Lyrica.

I.

LUCIA can boast a constant soul,
Thought I, amidst a changing world:
Thus we may see one steady pole,
Tho' giddy stars are round it hurl'd.

II.

But she betray'd a wav'ring mind,
Uncapable of constant love:
So the pole-star itself, we find,
Tho' unobserv'd, does always move.

III.

She'll yield, suspend, deny, consent
And wanton's with her lover's chain,
She'll vow, and of her vow repent;
Repent of that and vow again.

IV.

I'm weary of th' enchanted ground,
This false deluding mystery.
I've danc'd with fairies in a round
Enough already; set me free.

V. Why

IV.

Why, oh ye magick powers of love,
Do you torment your vot'ry so?
Say, did I ever faithless prove?
Inchanting visions *let me go.*

VI.

I ask no other favour now
For all the ills you've made me know,
Ne'er make and break another vow,
PERFIDIOUS CHARMER — let me go.

VII.

I'll think thy former **PERJURIES** o'er,
Thus — thus I'll break your **curst spell**,
Now you shall **pain and pleasure** no more,
BARBAROUS BEAUTY now FAREWELL.

XIII.

Now to the round of mortal Joys
May all my **ardent passions die**!
Deaths, dangers, wiles, and **strange decoys**
In unsuspected bosoms **lie**.

IX.

And yet my soul breaths love alone;
My essence is perpetual fire;
Still all my passions are but one,
The various pantings of desire.

X.

Well, if I hope no bliss from you,
Proud, nice, unkind, disdainful fair;
Adieu, ungen'rous world adieu,
I'll fly to heav'n and seek it there.

D

XI. Kind

XI.

Kind condescending deity,
Behold thy wanderer return!
Once for the creature, now for thee
In flames of fiercest love I burn.

XII.

I own, dear LORD, it was unjust
To think, a passion so divine
Was kindled for the fairest dust,
Which by prerogative was thine.

XIII.

Thy beauty, oh unchanging GOD,
Shall all my future hours employ;
Nor *Lucia*, that poor snowy clod,
Shall taint the unpolluted joy.

XIV.

Now to the world I'll tell and prove,
What worthless things these beauties be.
Now if I ever die for love,
It shall be, LORD, for love of thee.

Colin's Advice, or, Damon to Nisa.

I.

THE Cupids had left all the lawns;
The shepherds fell out about Pan:
The noise had affrighted the fawns,
And all the kind wood-doves were gone.

II.

The reeds had forgot their sweet strains,
 Nor murmur'd so soft as before;
 Disputes had distracted the swains,
 And love was regarded no more.

III.

Poor *Damon* might talk to the wind
 His passion for *Nisa* the fair,
 And think, and think on till he pin'd;
 And sigh till he vanish'd to air.

IV.

The shepherds sad comforters prove,
 Talk nought but of Pan and the times,
 Inhumanly banter his love,
 And call it all whining and rhimes.

V.

To shun all their jeers, and their strife,
 He flies to a neighbouring cave,
 To lament the hard fate of his life,
 In hopes 'twill be shortly his grave.

VI.

Against the damp rock he reclin'd,
 Like a languishing lover, his head:
 My soul now unbend thy whole mind,
 Here none can upbraid thee, he said.

VII.

He thought it a kind of relief,
 While here he lamented alone:
 Kind ecchoes repeated his grief,
 In plaints full as soft as his own.

VIII.

O all ye soft Powers above,
 And must I be silent and die?
 If *Nisa* but knew how I love,
 The charmer could never deny.

IX.

Young *Colin* had skill to complain,
 And mingle such art with his woe;
 The Nymphs were all touch'd with his pain,
 And tears from the Nereids flow.

X.

But *Damon*, a plain-hearted swain,
 On meer simple truths must rely.
 But what could meer truth hope to gain
 In a lover so artless as I?

XI.

What oceans of love through me roll!
 Oh 'tis not in words to impart
 The billows that hang on my soul,
 The sorrow that choaks up my heart.

XII.

Why, ye fates, was I destin'd to bear
 A sorrow I cannot reveal?
 Or kill me, or help me declare
 To *Nisa* the passion I feel.

XIII.

Young *Colin* stood listening near,
 And thus he surprizes the youth,
 If *Nisa* is human, she'll hear,
 Ah *Damon* no language like truth.

XIV. Go

XIV.

Go tell her, your own artless way,
Great passions can ne'er be express'd:
Simplicity still wins the day;
She knows how to guess at the rest.

XV.

True love in a soul that's sincere,
Is better than language or art:
Fine families tickle the ear,
But nature must soften the heart.

XVI.

'Tis done— I have writ to my fair,
But tremble to wait the reply;
Ah! *Nisa* true lovers are rare,
May *Damon* be happy or die!

SIN the greatest burden.

I.

O Thou that art resolv'd to try,
The patience of thy faints,
Stretch out thine everlasting arms,
When feebler nature faints.

II.

The obloquy, and wrath of men,
I'm born to suffer here;
All but their envy, Lord! I feel,
And patiently could bear.

III. Here

III.

Here I'm resign'd; my Father's hand
May use me as he please:
The burden of my mournful songs
Are heavier things than these.

IV.

The rage of men, the strife of tongues,
Scarce would I trials call;
But wear them as a glorious crown
Unmov'd, if that were all.

V.

Tongues, those sharp swords, may wound my name,
But cannot wound within;
Take all my comforts, Lord! they're thine,
But take away my SIN.

VI.

Here hangs the load! here clings my grief!
Here's the incessant smart!
O! what are foes, or treacherous friends,
To a more treacherous heart?

VII.

'Tis this, my friends, that makes my soul
Go mourning all the day;
This chills me when I else could smile
At all that men can say.

VIII.

I feel no other load but this,
I carry in my breast;
My GOD! wilt thou but this remove,
I'll laugh at all the rest.

On the death of a child, Oct. 18, 1722.

I.

A Few short panting breaths we draw,
Then earth to mother earth returns :
Life like a shooting meteor dies,
Or like a wasting lamp that burns.

II.

'Tis but a hand-breadth, Lord, at most ;
Why didst thou grudge so small a boon ?
The taper but began to blaze ;
Why didst thou puff it out so soon ?

III.

Soon the dear pleasing vision past,
But touch'd upon our mortal shore ;
Just smiled at the vain life we live,
Then vanish'd, and was seen no more.

IV.

So some new star before unknown,
Just twinkles in our lower sky ;
Then mounts above our feeble sight,
To shine in brighter worlds on high.

V.

But why should we lament the grace,
That made the babe's salvation sure ;
Without the hazard of a fight,
Which we behind must still endure ?

VI.

The Lamb in his fair book of life
Has names of every age and size ;
A perfect man in Christ at last
The youngest infant-saint shall rise.

On a Lover's Name and his Mistress's, written
on a Pew-door at St. James's, Exon.

*Si dominus dominæque, adeo sua mystica jungunt;
An venus hic arás, an Deus uter habet?*

English'd thus.

If God, and *Cloe's* beauty here
Are equally ador'd;
To whom d'ye dedicate this church;
To *Venus*, or the Lord?

Theron and Amanda.

I.

ON a calm ev'ning when our souls do prove
Fond and susceptible of nought but love;
When ev'ry breeze, and softer air
Raise exquisite ideas there,
And fan the forward flame;
When all those tender passions flow,
Which none but real lovers know,
Well know but cannot name;

II.

Then to a lonely mirtle-grove, where none
But pious disappointed lovers come,
To rend their hearts, or mingle souls,
Vow to be constant as the poles,
Or take their last farewell;
There *Theron* and *Amanda* meet,
While mournful cupids round 'em beat
Their wings a while, and fell.

III. And

III.

All other charms while fair *Amanda's* near
 Lost in superior beauties disappear,
 That sweet serene that serious air,
 Like holy saints at morning prayer,
 Or perfect ones above,
 Yet raise her awful beauties higher.
 At once they quench a lawless fire,
 And kindle vertuous love.

IV.

Theron's all manly grace, his noble mind
 From dregs of ill, and baseness is refin'd.
 His love deserves the glorious name,
 Ardent and pure seraphic flame,
 O heav'n unite the pair.
 No *Theron's* order'd to the grove,
 To take his leave of joyous love,
 And sweet *Amanda* there.

V.

"*Theron*," (says she) and ah too well he guesst
 His sentence near, and dreads to hear the rest.
 "'Tis vain to linger out a life
 " In love that must not hope relief,
 " This will but heighten pain,
 " Do, *Theron* try, remove thy heart,
 " For 'tis decreed — that we must part,
 " Never to meet again.

VI.

Oh Heav'n support — the fainting lover cries,
 Drops melting tears, and breaths out killing sighs.
 O who can bear the unequal load,
 To be depriv'd of so much good,

E

And

And all my hopes in you?
Well, thus false lovers win the day,
While real ones, who can't betray,
Pay dear for being true.

VII.

Then tells th' unmeasurable pains he bore,
And counts past and past endearments o'er,
In such an over melting air,
As soft *Amanda* could not bear,
Yet could not chuse but hear,
Then gently breath's an yielding sigh,
While drops unguarded from her eye
A sympathetic fear.

VIII.

She owns an equal flame, vows equal love,
The cupids smile and hover all above;
Thick golden arrows play around,
Infusing joys without a wound,
While all the cupids say,
“ Love happy pair, and wait a while,
“ Your kinder fortunes soon will smile
“ And bring the happy day.

The Desperate.

I.

'T WAS what I often thought, but now I find,
Of all th' unhappy wretches of my kind
'Twas *me* inexorable Heav'd design'd
For it's reserve of wrath.
In vain the angels (for they pity man,
And steal sometimes to help us when they can,)
In vain they strive, in vain they pray,
To turn the unwieldly arm some other way.

The dire decree is past;
 The earth is plunder'd, I'm undone,
 The dearest life, the richest soul is gone,
 To me there's nothing left, the world's a barren waste.

II.

Was't not enough to feel the storms
 Of fruitless love in all it's dreadful forms,
 And never know the *mild*?
 For many live-long tedious years,
 Drench'd deep in ever falling tears,
 And lean with wasting sighs and almost wild
 With ever racking fears
 Tamely to bear my chains,
 Without th' addition of these fiercer pains?

III.

These the rewards thy votaries must have,
 Oh adamant love? will nothing do
 But this thy patient unrewarded slave
 Must die a martyr too?
 Yea, my kind fate was not contented thus,
 But gently doom'd me to a more finish'd curse.
 For being sunk so low before,
 Uncapable of falling low'er,
 It rais'd me up to touch a crown,
 But rais'd me up to spurn me down.

IV.

It made my *Gloriana* yield,
 But better, better had she kill'd!
 With heav'nly smiles and matchless grace,
 With melting softness in her face,
 At last she bows to her devoted saint,
 But ah Heav'n made it but a treach'rous feint.
 She's ravish'd from my arms just in the first embrace.

Thus baffl'd *Ixion* hugs the air,
 When the hault'd wretch expected *Juno* there!
 Who can that poignant misery express,
 That sharpen'd by preceding happiness?
 Thus *Persians* add the greatest sting
 To slavery, who make a slave a king,
 Who, after three days reign,
 Drag'd from his throne in sacrifice is slain.
 Thus angels fell,
 Made to rebell,
 Created first in heav'n to aggravate their hell.

V.

How calmly she resign'd her breath,
 And gently bid farewell!
 After an eager long departing kiss,
 Her body sunk into the arms of death.
 Her soul fled swift to her too early bliss,
 And left her lover in the depths of hell.
 She's gone! she's gone! oh whither shall I go?
 I will indulge to the wide sea of woe,
 And torrents of despair,
 And drown myself in grief, or sigh myself to air,
 Oh ye remaining days make haste,
 Call me from this dreary waste!
 When will this throbbing heart stand still,
 How long beat on against my will?
 Beat faster, or not beat at all,
 One throb, one pulse, one hearty sigh for all,
 And burst these hardy walls of clay,
 And let my eager soul rash out and fly away.

VI.

O this tough thread of life! it will not break,
 All my eager struggle's too weak;
 How long must I in vain lie strugg'ling so?
 Be kind for once, ye fates, and let me go.

And

And yet — and yet there's no relief
 Why does the cruel sun thus mock my grief,
 And beat upon my head,
 Just to torment, but will not strike me dead?
 But hark — she calls!
 I hear her say,
 “ Make haste (my dear) ad come away
 I know her voice, 'tis she! 'tis she!
 She stays her glitt'ring guards for me.
 Farewell ye ills of time, i'll bear no more,
 But strait leap from the bank of this sad mortal shore.
 I come! I come!
 Thro' show'rs of tears, and storms of woe,
 In streams of reeking blood I go,
 To meet my *Gloriana* in the mirtle-grove,
 Fixt by the Gods of old for disappointed love.

Exon. 1714.

Welcome Evening.

I.

LET those who know no other bliss
 Than this poor dying life can give
 Sigh when they think how short it is,
 And how precariously we live.

II.

But thou, my soul, hast joys in store;
 May'st say at ev'ry setting sun,
 Courage my heart! come one day more
 Of a vain vexing life is gone.

III. Hail!

III.

Hail ! ye sweet ev'ning shades, all hail !
Drive these intruding cares away,
Hide with your kind relieving vail !
These sick'ning vanities of day.

IV.

Wrapt in these gentle shades I rest,
Hid from the world, the world from me:
But oh ! none know how I am blest
In this divine obscurity.

V.

Thro' groves of bliss I seem to stray ;
And in the thickest glooms of night
I shine in everlasting day,
And blaze with intellectual light.

VI.

While half the world dream, start, and sleep ;
And half cheat, fight, curse, rave and groan ;
Then I my silent jubile keep,
And hold my festival alone:

VII.

Till morning's melancholy dawn
Let's in confusion and the day ;
And NOISE and TUMULT hurry on,
And chase sweet *Salem's* peace away.

VIII.

How doleful all the world seems then !
How dismal what we here call day !
The earth seems one vast howling den,
And men like rav'nous beasts of prey.

IX.

Oh! what is all that men call light,
 Life, musick, pomp, delight, and mirth,
 But raving dreams, and hideous night,
 Howling and specters, hell and death?

X.

When will th' eternal morning dawn?
 Let in salvation and true day?
 Restore sweet *Salem's* joys again,
 And chase this hurrying time away?

GOD a CONSUMING FIRE.

I.

GREAT king of glory, dreadful bright!
 Thou piercing and heart-searching light!
 What sinner dares to venture nigh
 The burning vigour of thy eye?

II.

My GOD, I cannot gaze upon
 The fervent splendour of thy throne:
 Dry stubble may as well sustain
 The fiery ov'ns devouring flame.

III.

Such awful beams guard round thy face;
 Rays of essential holiness;
 When I would plead, methinks I see
 All kindling into jealousy.

IV. Flashes

IV.

Flashes of fearful glory fly
Round thy pavillion, oh most high!
More thah a guilty soul can bear,
And even startle me in prayer.

V.

When at thy foot-stool I begin
T' unfold long registers of sin;
I'm sing'd with a devouring flame,
And justice beats me off again.

VI.

Then the dear intercessor pleads :
Heav'n smiles while JESUS intercedes ;
CONSUMING FIRE no longer burns,
And all to milder glory turns.

The State of Bondage.

I.

O for some sweet assuring sign
To satisfy me GOD is mine !
That would be blis without alloy,
How could I live to bear the joy ?

II.

'Tis said to sigh away one's breath
In bondage through the fear of death.
A trembling vagabond, like Cain,
How shall I live to hear the pain?

III. With

III.

With aking heart I drag away
 The heavy-loaded hours of day:
 Terrors and boding dreams affright,
 And scare my guilty soul by night.

IV.

The ghosts of ancient crimes arise,
 And haunt me with a dire surprize.
 Started I wake, and try to pray;
 But sweat, and tofs, and long for day.

V.

But when the glorious sun does shed
 His beams around my guilty head,
 Like God's own eye, I shun the light,
 And vainly wish again for night.

God not implacable, or Despair no Vertue.

I.

WHAT mean these jealousies and fears,
 As if my LORD were loth to save?
 Or lov'd to see us steep'd in tears,
 And sink with sorrow to the grave?

II.

Does he want slaves to grace his throne?
 Or crush them with an iron rod?
 Is he refresh'd to hear us groan?
 Is he a *Nero*, or a *God*?

F

III Not

III.

Not all the Iniquities thou'lt wrought
 So much his tender bowels grieve ;
 As this unkind injurious thought,
 That he's unwilling to forgive.

IV.

What tho' thy sins are black as night,
 Or glowing like the crimson morn ?
 The Lamb's heart-blood can wash them white,
 As snow thro' the pure *Ether* born.

V.

It is amazing grace I own !
 And well may rebel-worms surprize !
 But tell me, was not God's own son
 A most amazing sacrifice ?

VI.

“ I've found a ransom as I live,
 “ No humble penitent shall die,
 “ (Says God) if he will but believe
 “ There is in me such grace, and try.





LETTERS

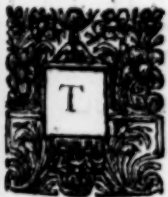
Of the Late REVEREND

Mr. Hubert Stogdon.

NUMB. I.

Asbwick, Nov. 29. 1717.

Honoured Uncle and Aunt,

 **T**HOUGH he who has fixed the bounds of my habitation, has called me oft out of your sight ; yet I am sure, you are in my remembrance every day. And did not duty oblige me to it ; I hope, gratitude would not suffer me to forget such good benefactors as you have been to me. It is not in me to requite you ; or indeed to make any returns, but acknowledgments, and ever to pray the never failing God to make it up a thousand fold, in the assurances of his love, and the fruits of righteousness,

ness, peace, and joy in the holy Ghost to you, and yours. *Amen.* How sweet is it to have our evidences for heaven clearer and clearer, as we approach nearer and nearer, to the invisible world! how comfortable must it be, after a long life of labour, and travel, to stand upon the brink of eternity, with the earnest of eternal joy in our bosom! This would throw a glory over death itself, and make the *last enemy* like the kind angel, that knocked off *Peter's* chains, and delivered him out of prison. But oh! the melancholy of leaving life with a dark uncertainty, and in a wilderness of doubts and fears how it will be with me for ever. Must not the thought be cutting *then?* however tolerable it is apt to appear to us *now.* Ah me! within an hour, and I shall be, as I must be for ever: But O dark, dark amaze! Where will that be? Now the die is cast; my soul is unalterably determined for heaven or hell: but I know not whether. The thoughts of dying without assurance is terrible: though it is the lot of most of God's children: but then generally speaking, I believe, they might have more cheerful hopes at least, had not this insnaring world, these encumbering cares, and too sollicitous thoughts about one perishing vanity, or other drawn off the mind from a more serious, and close meditation of what they were born for, and what they were hastening to. But may your hopes revive, as your day hastens! and as you are drawing to the evening of your appointed time, I pray, that you may experience that in your own souls, which you find, *Zech. 14. 7. viz. in the evening it shall be light.*

I would have written to my dear cousins; but I must beg their excuse to another opportunity: Only be pleased to tell them, that I would beg them to be at peace among themselves, and to mind the best way, propose the best ends, and choose the best portion.

NUMB.

NUMB. II.

A Letter to one of the Congregation, whose Minister he had been in Devonshire.

Ashwick, Jan. 11. 1717-18.

THOUGH it hath pleased GOD to place me among a few serious and hearty people; who would gladly do any thing in their power to shew their affection, and respect to me; how unworthy soever of it; and though I have great reason to admire the goodness of GOD, who has given me very surprizing instances of his providential love, by stirring up the hearts of some, who have seen me, and known me; (and which is more) of some who have not, to shew me kindness; yet many attempts have been made; and more especially by one, to whom I am an absolute stranger; to hinder my success here, or any favour from any elsewhere; and particularly, to represent me in very odious colours at *London*. I bless GOD, I should hate the thoughts of returning the like unchristian treatment; if it were in my power. And I hope I am prepared for much more of this kind; if it shall please GOD to exercise me with it. As it has done me no real hurt where I am known, so I have friends even in *London*, who will use their utmost interest (as they have assured me,) to set matters in so true a light, that my adversary may have reason to repent his rash, and zealous undertaking.

I thank my GOD, as far as I can judge of myself by my present prevailing, and I hope, steady temper of mind, it is not in the power of any mortal to rob me of my most valuable peace. O, my dear friend, the inward testimony of a good conscience will

will carry us through all the little storms, and make us ride with a calm and undisturbed mind, over all the ruffling billows of this sea of troubles. Let us take care to *prove our own work* (which must be by an unshaken regard to the word of GOD, and not to man) and then we shall have *rejoycing in ourselves alone, and not in another.*

I am satisfied GOD is doing some great thing for his poor afflicted church, and preparing the way for our LORD's most glorious kingdom, and knocking off the *tyrannical fetters* of blind obedience, and implicit faith from men's minds apace. There is, as far as I can learn, all over the kingdom, the good old spirit of the BEREANS revived; the very reverse of the spirit of popery. Men will no longer take things on trust; nor believe, because our forefathers though ever so pious and venerable, told them so, or so. But they will now immediately *to the law and the testimony; search the scriptures* themselves, and see whether it be so or no.

In the mean time, let not the variety of opinions in matters of religion disturb you. Let it only teach you and me, to keep closer to *scripture*, and scripture *language*, in our searches after, and discourses about the doctrines of the christian religion; and above all, conscientiously practise what we do know to be our duty; and we are secure, no error then shall prejudice our eternal salvation. Nothing can be more certain than this. *Grace shall be with all those that love the Lord JESUS CHRIST in sincerity. Whosoever shall confess, that Jesus is the son of God, GOD dwelleth in him, and he in GOD; and if any one saith he loveth God, and yet hates his brother, he is a liar.* And in this short compass you have the whole substance of the christian religion summed up. He that believeth, *that Jesus Christ is the son of God, (and consequently the Messias, and Saviour of the world,)*

and

and loveth him in sincerity, (and so sincerely endeavours to know and obey his laws, as God shall give him understanding and assistance,) and that has *love* and charity for all those without exception, that he hopes do the like, such a one, let him be who he will, or of what opinion, party, or denomination soever; such a one, I say; or rather you see what scripture says, let men say what they will, is a TRUE CHRISTIAN; and will be found so and owned as such at the great day; when all unjust sentences, and uncharitable censures will signify nothing. Here, here, my dear friend is rest for the sole of your feet. Here you stand upon an unshaken foundation, and believe me, yea rather believe the scriptures, you will find any thing *less* than this will be too narrow to comprehend all christians. Well, it's but a little while (blessed be God!) we are to continue in this dark, ignorant, sinful, bustling world. Let us *commit ourselves* to God in the *way of well doing*; and all hell shall not be able to hurt us, nor all the world to keep us from the embraces of our exalted redeemer. Were we to be always poring upon the troubles, and vexing vanities of this life; it were enough to discourage us indeed. But let us lift up our heads to the happy world of light, life, and love; of rest, perfection, and eternal satisfaction; whither we are going; and renew our strength, and revive our courage, and cheer our drooping spirits with that soul-inlivening thought,

—Long nights and darkness dwell below

With scarce a twinkling ray:

But the bright world to which we go,

Is everlasting day.

There on a green, and flow'ry mount

Our weary souls shall fit;

And with transporting joys recount

The labours of our feet.

NUMB.

NUMB. III.

*To the same Person.**Ashwick, Feb. 1717-18.**My Christian Friend,*

I take it as a particular kindness, that you would so far concern yourself for one, who is under such a load of infamy, as to own me; when it would be thought crime enough to lay you open to censure, if it were known, that you had any friendly correspondence with me. But o! would to GOD, all the hard speeches, and uncharitable censures of rash zealots, weak christians, ignorant bigots, and church-dividing incendiaries were turn'd upon me, upon me **ONLY**; so the church of CHRIST, and all the suffering members of it might enjoy rest and peace. How joyfully should I bear the reproaches of ten thousands. And he, who knows my heart can witness for me, that I verily believe, I should leap for joy, to have all the malignities, and violence of an outrageous party transferred to me, if my father my brethren, and fellow-christians could be excused. How sweet would it be, methinks to live despised, and condemned, and hated of men, if a discharge of their choler, and their gall on such an insignificant being as I would satisfy them? And yet this, I must tell you too, is not, I think, a very great instance of self-denial: because any kind of *tongue* persecution now, must, I am confident, appear small and trifling to me, and would scarce deserve the name of a trial: And for any thing else, that it might be in their power to keep me from, or deprive me of, or load me with; I think it can be no more than

than I *have* already resigned, or *could* chearfully and easily bear upon such glorious conditions, as peace, and goodness towards all but *myself*.

I bless, I praise, I admire the goodness of GOD, which has attended me ever since I had a being. And I must speak it, (for why should I conceal his glorious grace?) I particularly bless him for afflictions, disappointments, and disgraces. Little do mine enemies think, how happily their sharpest arrows wound me. And did they know how I even *rejoyce* in the *tribulation* they give me; I do not know, but some would out of meer spite, and revenge give over their revilings. I mention this instance particularly, because to be afflicted in this kind has naturally, you know, (I doubt by experience,) a more destructive, and malignant influence, than many others; such as diseases, pains, losses, crosses, &c. which have a tendency to create *pity* and *compassion*, at least from others, whom humanity itself would make our *helpers* and *comforters*; not our *aggravators*, *haters*, and persecutors, as even christianity (falsly so called) prompts them to be in the present case. But I must needs say, I do not know but my afflictions, my dear *afflictions*, which GOD has allotted me, of one kind or other, have been better to me *than all the other cords of love*, which he has been pleased to make use of to draw me to himself; excepting only my SAVIOUR, the HOLY GHOST, and the BIBLE. Bear up, my good friend, stand fast, continue as you do, instant in prayer; and it will be very hard for any of our enemies to hurt us upon our knees. Kneeling is the best posture of fighting with our spiritual enemies. And as for our mistaken friends, GOD will take care, we shall not suffer any thing from them neither, which shall not be abundantly made up. In the mean time, let us pity them, and pray for them, we shall I hope see many of them in heaven for all

this. It is impossible to say, what allowances God will make for mistaken zeal. I cannot but be very large on that head; though I abhor that in them, which renders charity so very necessary to make us regard them as *dear brethren* in our common LORD notwithstanding their blemishes. When I reflect on those I have myself to acknowledge, I cannot but admire the goodness and mercy of God, that I have any reasonable hope of salvation. And how many must I think there are with whom it would be insufferable arrogance in me to compare myself in grace, and in virtue, whom I cannot but think however, I exceed in this one point of charity; and I must also add, in that one point of knowledge, for which their charity is straitned towards us. I do not wonder, Mr. B—— I should be for execution before examination, and for burning without trial. It's the nature of that disease to be precipitant.

I hope, and pray, that God will never suffer your *little flock* to be destitute, or *the wrath of man* so far to prevail over their reason, and religion, yea, their very common sense, as to discourage and desert * two such valuable and able ministers of the *new testament*, as you have to dispence the word of *eternal life*. I do, I can assure you, bear you, and the *small bandful*, (which I have exchanged for another like it,) daily upon my heart, there, where I can best remember you.

NUMB.

* Mr. Starr, and Mr. Force. The former is now a Doctor of Physick: The latter a Custom-house Officer. They would not comply with the test of human Forms, and therefore were obliged to quit the ministerial Function.

NUMB. IV.

*Ashwick, Feb. 15, 1717-18.**My Dear Friend,*

I think, I seldom speak to my GOD, but I have you and yours upon my heart. And I humbly request a petition for such a one as me in your daily prayers. It cannot be long e'er our praying time, and our watching time, and our working time will be over. GOD grant we may find an happy issue of it! This body of sin and corruption, will not clog, and hinder us much longer. Our days are but short, and sure that can be no melancholy thought to those, who groan under the burden of cursed sin; the sad remains of infidelity, carnality, reluctance to duty, &c. The LORD increase our hatred of sin, our love to himself, and to his Son, our dear exalted Redeemer, who I trust, is pleading our cause at his Almighty Father's right hand; and after we have done, and suffered his will here below, may we be taken up to sing the wonders of sanctifying grace, and redeeming love for ever and ever. *Amen.*

NUMB. V.

*Ashwick, Feb. 15. 1717-18.**Dear Cousin,*

SINCE I have heard, what a spirit is working among the over zealous christians round about you, I have been seriously concerned to know, how you bear up in the midst of it. You are by this time

accustomed to, and, I hope, prepared for, and fortified against all hard speeches, that can be unrighteously levelled at you; and can sustain the sharp trial of bitter reflections, unreasonable censures, unjust reproaches, and cruel *mockings* of orthodox libertines, yea and of orthodox christians too. But what I want particularly to know, is, whether the uncharitable spirit has been so far suffered to prevail, as to marr your business, and destroy your trade.

I cannot better fill up most of the remaining part of my letter, than by saying to you, what I received, some time since, from a very worthy, serious, and learned minister, whom I had never the honour to see, *viz.* “ I have much laid to heart your particular case, since I have been acquainted with it; and
 “ have not failed to implore the divine assistance to
 “ support you, which I was sensible, you needed to
 “ sustain the shock without sinking under the weight
 “ of the affliction. Now Sir, you know, what it is
 “ to take up the *cross*, and to follow your LORD and
 “ Master, the *captain* of your *salvation*, who was
 “ *made perfect through sufferings*. Come! let us
 “ look beyond this gloomy vale, and lift up our
 “ eyes to the blessed regions above; and think of
 “ that day, that glorious day, when *Christ who is*
 “ *our life*, shall appear, pardon our sins, completely
 “ purify our natures, and vindicate us from the reproaches and calumnies, which have been unjustly
 “ cast upon us. And if GOD will justify, who is he
 “ that shall condemn? In the mean time, let us, with
 “ a meek and calm spirit, bear what GOD in his
 “ wisdom shall lay upon us; believing his right,
 “ and acknowledging, that upon other accounts we
 “ suffer very justly and much less than sin deserves.
 “ Let us therefore be dumb, and silent before him;
 “ begging only that grace, which shall help us to
 “ make a profitable use of his chastisements; and
 then

" then, though *no afflictions are joyous, but grievous,*
for the present, yet afterwards we shall find, that
they produce the peaceable fruits of righteousness."

These words were of great use and comfort to me, therefore I could not but impart them to you, according to that of the apostle, 2 Cor. 1. 3, 4. *Blessed be God, even the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them, which are in any trouble; by the comfort, wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.*

I bless God, I am in a calm and in no slavish fear of to-morrow. I am abundantly satisfied about my worldly interest. If I have but little, I do not desire much. My good God has given me such pledges of his fatherly care, that I should be inexcusable to distrust him for the time to come. May I commit myself to him in a way of well-doing, and all will be well, all best. I desire to be *jealous of myself with a godly jealousy*; and beg an interest in your prayers, and of every christian friend beside.

NUMB. VI.

Ashwick, Nov. 26. 1718.

Dear Cousin,

I am glad to hear, there are any hopes of a more quiet spirit among the churches with you. If you can bear the brunt, and weather the storm; I do not, I cannot question but that, a great deal of good will come out of all this evil. There is always a shaking where there is to be a winnowing. There was first a shake and a moving of the waters, before they became salutary. There was a *rustling mighty wind*, a perfect

perfect storm, and tempest before the descent of the Holy Ghost. — I have sent a letter to Mr. W—d upon his false report at *London*, that *I was refused ordination in Devonshire*; which as I told him, was not only false; but what he knew to be so; — And that it was well I kept a copy of the letter, I had sent to Mr. B—l, &c. I desired an answer, that he might vindicate himself from a false charge, if he had not said so; for what I wrote, I told him was only upon supposition, he did indeed write so to *London*. If he did, I said, I knew he would never be able to clear himself. I put a few queries to him, amongst others, whether he would not have acted *more* like one, who had a concern for the prosperity of the church, and the welfare of our LORD's kingdom; seeing he thought me not fit to be ordained; if he had let Mr. B—y &c. know his reasons, why he judged me unworthy, (whatever the success had been,) than meerly by complaining after it was done? I might have added, *with a falsehood tacked to it*. This letter I sent, *Oct. 17*. I have yet no answer. Nor indeed do I expect any, though I will *as much as in me lies*, live in peace with all men, yet I think it my duty to endeavour (whatever the success be) to make such ashamed, as will falsely accuse. The great Mr. *Peirce* neglected these vile aspersions, till he was exposed to the rage and curses of the mob; and I believe sees it necessary to resent them. Better he had attempted to suppress them in the beginning; unless providence turns it to to the best (as I hope it will) that he should bear them so long. There is none so contemptible, but he may do mischief. I love to stop it at first, and have found that method successful. The LORD be with you, and keep you. Let not controversies eat out practical religion. I must caution all my friends against that. And let us take heed of extreams, and dread as much as our adversaries, to have a
low

low and degrading thought of the Son of God, and Redeemer of the world.

NUMB. VII.

Asbwick, April 2. 1719.

Dear Friend,

You hinted in your last, that you intended to think of that great article of life, which, generally speaking, renders a man's condition (as to this world) very good, or very bad, I believe. I pray God to direct, and choose, and determine for you. It is not only a very weighty; but a very serious business, though it is but too seldom thought of under that view. I speak to you with the more freedom on this head; because I am more sensible than ever of my sin, folly, and rashness in matters of this nature. Oh the dangerous and idolatrous time of youth! How apt are we in the heat of youthful blood, and flow of passion to love and honour and serve the *creature* more than the *Creator*, who is blessed for evermore? *Amen.*

I lately looked over the copies of some letters I sent to Mrs. M, &c. which I keep by me, as a warning and a caveat against such an extravagant love of the creature: And I am sure, could not read them without shame and confusion. I plainly see now, that the passion was too great to be felt for any but God and CHRIST. I do not mention this as a check to your desires; but only as an admonition to regulate them, and to keep them within due bounds. Beg God's direction, be not only contented but *pleased*, that providence should determine. I am sure, I have often blessed God for my disappointments of this kind; and see now, how God ordered them for the best:
And

And I am so much the more satisfied in the determination, because I humbly hope it was in answer to prayer, *

Mr. ——'s conduct with respect to Mr. *Peirce* and Mr. *Hallet*, will render him infamous throughout the kingdom. How is it possible, that a man, who has talked so much against tests and impositions, could find in his conscience to submit to one himself? or, if he could; with what face, reason or conscience could the same person impose it upon others? And joyn in that wretched, and infamous *advice*, that their denying the Father, and the Son to be one God, is an error that will not only excuse, but *justify* withdrawing from their communion? Nothing can be more directly contrary to his own repeated, publick declarations, or, I am sure, his repeated talk in private. God forgive him, I would not have such a load upon my conscience for the world, as I must have had, had I been engaged in acting such an unchristian, unprotestant like, uncharitable, unpeaceable part.

Blessed be God, that he has stirred up such a noble spirit of christian liberty in *London*: where it was carried in a meeting of above an hundred ministers, at *salterns-ball*, that no human tests, articles, or interpretations should be urged as the trial of a man's orthodoxy; and that no minister should be condemned as heterodox, or an heretick, unless he taught, &c. contrary to express scripture. This was the substance of one part of their determination. You have doubtless seen Mr. *Peirce's* half sheet, which contains the case of the *ejected ministers*. Here is great enquiry for them. And even the orthodox themselves condemn the unrighteous proceedings. May we fear God, and in matters of conscience be brought under the

* And here he inserts a Poem which he calls his *Farewel to love*, which the reader will find in the collection of his composures of that kind.

the power of no man! *but stand fast in the liberty wherein Christ has made us free; call no man father upon earth, make nothing the rule of our faith, but scripture only; and never submit to any imposing spirit, though from protestants and dissenters, any more than from papists or tories, or else it is in vain to pretend to be protestants, or dissenters any longer. God keep, and guide us into all necessary truth; which we are sure he will do, if we sincerely search after it.*

NUMB. VIII.

Ashwick, July 20. 1719.

Dear Cousin,

I write to you now, methinks, as one who has been harrassed, tossed, buffeted, and weather-beaten these several years with little intermission. You have learnt I hope by this time, to bear the reproaches of the zealot, and the ungodly. It has pleased your heavenly father to call you to the trial, and exercise of *faith and patience*, in an uncommon degree; but yet, no more than was common with the primitive christians, you know, who were called out to fight the good *fight of faith*, and often to *resist unto blood*. Now we may read those parts of our bible, which relate to the sufferings and trials of such as took up the cross, and listed themselves under CHRIST's banner, with a *new* and kind of experimental light. May our good GOD be cleansing, and purging us from our remaining dross by all the sufferings we are or shall be called to endure. As to his church, I hope, he is cleansing it. He seems to have his fan in his hand. What winnowing and sifting there will be

H

through.

throughout the kingdom, we know not. But o! that none may make *shipwreck of faith, and a good conscience*; and for the love or fear of this world stifle the doctrines of the Gospel, or submit to the tyrannical *impositions* of men. O Lord! plead thou thine own righteous cause. Who are the *troublers of Israel*? Who are the disturbers of thy church? Who are the schismatics? Who have turned the world, and the gospel upside down? Are they those who are for no impositions, force, or violence in matters of religion? Who are for making nothing necessary either for communion, or salvation, but what scripture has expressly made so? Who are for searching, and examining, whether what they have been educated in be according to the *truth, as it is in Jesus*, or no? who are for making use of all the helps God has given them for spiritual wisdom, and understanding; and are for leaving every one to his own master, and the last day, to answer for his choice; and are for owning no other authority, but that of CHRIST; and no other laws but those he has made; and are willing to own all such for brethren, who will do the like, how different soever they may be in matters of opinion? Are these to be treated as incendiaries, hereticks, firebrands? &c. Yes! my friend, you have lived to see this; even from *Protestant dissenters* too. O what is the christian religion come to! To what vile, and infamous purposes has that holy and blessed institution been prostituted? No wonder if such men are sometimes seen divested of all tenderness, bowels, reason, and humanity; who suppose revelation to be built upon the ruins, and destruction, not upon the supposition of *natural religion*. I should be glad, if you could, among any of your mystical divines, get this fair question answered for me, *viz.*

Quære, Seeing you grant, there is such a thing as a contradiction to reason, and assert there is such a thing

thing as a mystery, which, though it looks contrary to reason, is not so, but only above it; I desire to know, how I may distinguish a mystery from a contradiction; and by what internal marks, and characteristicks, I may always know them, the one from the other; that I may be sure not to be imposed upon, as it is granted, the *Papists* are in the mystery of *transubstantiation*?

— I conclude with an expression I have often heard from that excellent, and strictly conscientious, pious, and primitive divine, Mr. *Whiston*. *If truth and honesty be against us, may they prevail against us!*

NUMB. IX.

To the Reverend Mr. John Force, at Bovey-Tracy, in Devon.

Ashwick, July 20. 1719.

Dear Brother,

I received yours, which gave me a very melancholy account of affairs in *Devonshire*. But I cannot say, it was surprizing; for I think, I should not be surprized, if I heard, the orthodox speak of stoning you. Who would have believed so much popery to be hid in the cloaks of a presbytery? Who would have thought, that those who have suffered in defence of *protestant liberty of judging for one's self*, and whose cry once was, "The bible, the *meer bible*, is a perfect, compleat, sufficient, and *only rule*, without humane traditions, interpretations, synodical decrees, canons, and decisions, &c." Who I say would have thought, that these very persons should infamously plead for the same, and wickedly and absurdly

throughout the kingdom, we know not. But o! that none may make *shipwreck of faith, and a good conscience*; and for the love or fear of this world stifle the doctrines of the Gospel, or submit to the tyrannical *impositions* of men. O Lord! plead thou thine own righteous cause. Who are the *troublers of Israel*? Who are the disturbers of thy church? Who are the schismatics? Who have turned the world, and the gospel upside down? Are they those who are for no impositions, force, or violence in matters of religion? Who are for making nothing necessary either for communion, or salvation, but what scripture has expressly made so? Who are for searching, and examining, whether what they have been educated in be according to the *truth, as it is in Jesus*, or no? who are for making use of all the helps God has given them for spiritual wisdom, and understanding; and are for leaving every one to his own master, and the last day, to answer for his choice; and are for owning no other authority, but that of CHRIST; and no other laws but those he has made; and are willing to own all such for brethren, who will do the like, how different soever they may be in matters of opinion? Are these to be treated as incendiaries, hereticks, firebrands? &c. Yes! my friend, you have lived to see this; even from *Protestant dissenters* too. O what is the christian religion come to! To what vile, and infamous purposes has that holy and blessed institution been prostituted? No wonder if such men are sometimes seen divested of all tenderness, bowels, reason, and humanity; who suppose revelation to be built upon the ruins, and destruction, not upon the supposition of *natural religion*. I should be glad, if you could, among any of your mystical divines, get this fair question answered for me, *viz.*

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furdly impose them upon others? Protestant popery, but of all protestant dissenting popery is the most insufferable. Well! I am satisfy'd, the day is breaking, and no wonder if Satan rage. He knows *his time is but short*. Mr. Clark, in his annotations, has a pretty fancy enough, upon the mighty rushing wind, that preceded the descent of the Holy Ghost. *Commutations*, says he, *and disturbances commonly go before times of illumination and reformation*. Or, to that purpose it is. Let God do his own work, and take his own way. What, my dear Brother, if we are to be accounted the *off-scouring* of all things, and what if our name is to be thrown out as abominable, what if the people rage against us, and say, *Away with such fellows from the earth; it is not fit they should live*. Alas! What then? Is not this the common cry against those, who cannot fall in with the corruption, and iniquity of the times? What glorious companions have we in our sufferings? What a cloud of examples! Now we are tried, Whether we shall forsake Christ for the love of this present world, or no. For it is his cause we are engaged in, I am persuaded, who are vindicating him from the *robbery of making himself equal to God*; which was the malicious charge brought against him by the *Jews* indeed, but which he always disclaimed and denied; or else, which is the case of all the nonsubscribers, we are vindicating the sufficiency of the scriptures, which testify of him, and pleading for the perfection of his laws, and the sacredness of his legislature, which ought not to be affronted by the animadversions, by-laws, and supplements of poor ignorant men. It is true, it is not the *Letter*, but it is owned the *sense* of scripture is the *rule*. But whose sense? my own, or anothers? If another's the *Pope's* by all means. For he can plead prescription for it; and that will settle it once for all.

Scripture

Scripture consequences, as far as I see them, I must know, are binding. But none but those I can see, sure. When I say, *scripture alone*, is a sufficient and perfect rule of faith, I mean, that all that is *necessary* to be known and believed in order to *salvation*, is so clearly revealed in scripture, that it is not left to be deduced by consequences at all, but is *directly* and *expressly* asserted; and all other things more or less obscurely, or clearly, as they are of more or less importance. Therefore, though I am obliged by the most remote consequences perhaps, when I see them, yet I need not disturb myself with fears, lest I should not see those consequences, which are *necessary*, if any are. For, if they are *necessary*, they are, no doubt, *unavoidable* too. The way of salvation is so plain, that a wayfaring man, tho' a fool, shall not err therein.

I rejoyce, you are so well reconciled to the providence. I pray daily to GOD to support, comfort, and direct all those who are called to their trial. Let us wait, and pray, and do our duty, and leave events to GOD, who knows what he is doing. But, above all things, let us prepare daily for our accounts, for death, and judgment, and eternity. Here we are tost, and we hear the tempest, and it rattles about our ears. But o! methinks, I see delectable mountains of *peace, serenity and love; the dear delicious landships of the Paradise above.*

But now is the time for wrestling, and praying, *that having done all* we may be enabled to stand;

NUMB. X.

Asbwick, Dec. 16. 1719.

Dear Cousin,

I AM very glad, Mr. *Peirce* bears up so well, and is more than a conqueror in the midst of so many enemies. I wish he may never have an occasion to repent of his coming to *Exon*, as, I hope, hitherto he has not. For I cannot but think, GOD has great work for him to do, as well as great trials for him to bear. The LORD give him patience, courage, and success! It is another piece of good news to me, that I hear, you can cast your care, and commit your life, and livelihood into the hands of that good God, who will care for you. *The young lions may lack, and suffer hunger, but they that wait on the Lord shall want no good thing.* Count it all joy, when you fall into divers temptations. Matth. vi, and Heb. xi. and xiith Chapters, I believe, give you a great deal of comfort, and may they more and more! And may we both go on improving in, and tasting the sweets of, those three cardinal vertues, *Faith, Hope, and Charity!*

I have, with this, written a Letter to my poor afflicted *Uncle*, and *Aunt*. Death then has broken in upon that family; and GOD's rod has been shaken over them all, and seems to be *stretched out still*. The LORD grant, the solemn voice of it may be heard, and obey'd. I was griev'd, but I cannot say, I was surprized at the mournful news of your letter. Changes in a changeable world are but necessary, and ought to be expected. But how hard is it not to rely upon creatures more than is fit. How difficult not to promise ourselves too much from them, or too long

long time with them : And how long is it e'er we learn that (seemingly easy) lesson, viz. *to converse with dying men as dying men* ? The fashion of this world is passing away. Kingdoms are vanishing, assemblies are dissolving, families are breaking, we all are dying ; but this is our hope, and comfort, we are going to a world without end, to a kingdom that cannot be shaken, to the general assembly that will never dissolve, to the whole family of heaven, and earth, gathered to Christ our living head, and we are all next door to immortality. Let us comfort ourselves with these thoughts, and one another with these words.

NUMB. XI.

Dear Cousin,

I HAVE read the *Western Inquisition*, and I hope thousands have already blush'd to see, how *Presbyterians* have affected *episcopal authority*, and *Protestants* have abandon'd *protestant* principles, and yet profess to be *Presbyterians*, and *Protestants* still.

GOD onely knows, what we may be call'd to suffer for the sake of a good conscience : (We have not yet resisted unto Blood :) but this I know, that a good conscience will abundantly recompence for it, whatever it may be. I think, there is scarce any evil, common to men, can befall me, but I have frequently thought of it, meditated upon it, and labour'd, in the best manner I could, to prepare for it. And I bless GOD, I think I was never easier in my life, and the world never troubled me less, than since I resigned the World. I have, and shall have, food and raiment, and, I hope, shall therewith be contented. May I be useful to Some ! I and do not care how much I am hated

bated by others. But I would not, methinks, be a piece of useless lumber in the world. It is indeed an easy matter to talk of submission to the divine will, when God has so far secur'd me from these calamities which are passing through the land. I have a retirement allotted me by providence, where I can enjoy my friends, my self, and my God in some measure, out of the drift of the tempest; tho' it rattles round us, and rages, and beats about us every day. Our names are cast out as vile; we are the *off-scouring*, &c. but in God we put our trust, in him we rejoyce. But my heart akes for my dear friends in *Exon*, and *Devon*. How is it? How do you bear up? What are your hopes? What are your fears? Does providence provide a competency? Do not you find, this affliction has made the world more tasteless to you, and heaven more desirable? And have not these troubles (with which we are toss'd as with a tempest) a tendency to lift us upward? to purify and sublimate the affections, and to set them *on things above*? I say, is not Christ, and his interest, dearer to you than ever? notwithstanding you suffer as *despisers* of him; as they slanderously report: It is so, I hope, I can truly say, with me. And I doubt not but you experience the same. I am sometimes ready to think, Where will these things end? But that is God's care, not mine. Let us mind duty, and leave events to him, who knows how to govern his church. Whether God will at this time restore *primitive Christianity*, and recover us out of the grand *Apostacy*, (tho' I cannot forbear hoping) I know not. But this I know, it shall go *well with the righteous*; and that sufferings must be expected in a state of trial, and *he that holds out to the end shall be saved*. What should make us fond of sufferings, but that we know we must suffer, or sin? Welcome sufferings then, welcome disgraces, welcome reproaches even from

our brethren ! for I shall still own some of them, by whom we suffer, as such. Let them call us infidels, unbelievers, and say we have denied the *faith*. This is my reply, 2 Cor. iv. 13, 14. *My brethren, we have the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed therefore have I spoken; we also have believed, and therefore speak, knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by JESUS, and shall present us with YOU.*

Be pleased to give my humble service to Mr. Peirce, with a thousand thanks for all his services, and labours of love; for which GOD will not fail to reward him; and tell him, I did not *promise*, I would never speak of the present controversy in the pulpit; (for so, I doubt it will be understood, as he has expressed himself;) but on the contrary, I told him, when he persuaded me not to meddle with it, that I would not, could not *promise*, I would *never*; but, as practical religion had been the great thing I had endeavoured to recommend, and inculcate, so I said, that was my design, and I hope, it ever shall be, and I am sure, has been. Mr. Peirce, I remember, replied, "No, I would not have you *promise*, but "you may say, that now you do not *design* it; which "does not oblige you for ever," &c. This was the sum of his answer; if not the words. And I am sure, my hearers will witness for me, that I have endeavoured to be plain, and practical. I did preach *one*, and but *one* sermon on the controversy. The occasion was this, After I had preached about a year upon independent subjects, I thought it time to begin a regular body of divinity; and introduced it with a preparatory sermon, to shew the *connection of natural and revealed religion*. Then I proceeded to prove the being, and attributes of GOD: Upon which, I thought all religion was grounded; therefore I intended to have been very particular and careful

ful upon it. In course I came to the *Unity*. Here I had some debate with myself, whether I should defer the doctrine of the *Trinity*, till I came to *revealed Religion*, or give my thoughts of it *now*? I saw it to be as important an article as, perhaps, most in *religion*. And I could not tell how I should at the great day be able to lift up my head, if I did *baulk* or *shun* such a solemn point, when it came in my way. I did not see but I might as well skip any other attribute, as this of *Unity*. And then, how could I be said to declare the *whole counsel* of God, or not to have kept back something which was *profitable*, whether it was grateful or not. It is but protracting the time, through fear, a little longer, thought I, I had as good do it now. I shall have past my test with men the sooner; and I shall see, whether God has any work for me to do, or no, in his vineyard. I did indeed long to know, what was to be my lot. I was resolved not to go out of my way to meet it, nor could I tell how to go out of my way to avoid it. I will trust God with myself, and with the success of his own truths. It was ungrateful work to flesh and blood, I am sure, and I would gladly (God knows) have been excused, if I had thought I might.

In that sermon I told my sentiments plainly and fully; and left it to the people's judgment. Upon this, several of my little handful left me, without speaking one word to me. And some ministers of the gospel have done their part to render those few, that remain, uneasy. I hope we are like to be easy however. About a quarter of a year since I found two, whom I least of all suspected, (how little is man to be depended upon!) were uneasy. I thereupon took an occasion to preach the next Lord's day in the forenoon, upon those words, *The greatest of these is CHARITY*; in the afternoon on those, *It cannot be but offences will come; but woe be to those by whom they come*. After the sermon, I de-
fired

fired them “ to consult among themselves, whether
 “ I might be useful to them any longer, or no: I un-
 “ derstood two were dissatisfied: And I did not know
 “ how many more. You know, (said I,) my life, my
 “ preaching, and my principles. If I can do no
 “ good, I will do no hurt. I am ready to give place
 “ to any other that you shall think will be more pro-
 “ fitable to you, than myself. Now consider once
 “ for all, and take notice of this, I will have no
 “ more trouble from you hereafter on this head. ”

I withdrew, and they unanimously agreed to acqui-
 esce in me. I have heard no more of it since. I am
 not solicitous about what may be. I labour to *keep a*
conscience void of offence towards God, and towards all
men : Therefore comfortably *look for the mercy of God*
to eternal life.

NUMB. XII.

To the Reverend Mr. John Force.

Ashwick, April 15.

I will preach as long as people will hear me preach, and
 I will preach faithfully. I have, I hope, long since
 resigned any considerable expectations from the world:
 and therefore, I am sure, I cannot be much disap-
 pointed in it. My expectations are great and glori-
 ous, chearing, and refreshing from another world.
 Food and raiment, with a great deal of infamy, and
 reproach, is what, I hope, I am contented with in
 this. But O may it please God to grant me a joyous
 passage out of it! For, who can bear the thought of
 dying without heaven full in view? There, my dear
 friend, I hope we shall meet, and clasp, and live, and

love, and praise for ever. In the mean time, let us bear our trials with christian fortitude. We know in *whom we have believed*, we know in *whom to trust*. If I am born to be the butt of uncommon afflictions; be it so; may I but have strength to bear them! The greatest thing I ever hope to have said of me, is, *He bore afflictions well*. I am struggling, I am hoping, though I am almost fainting. Come, all will be well.

NUMB. XIII.

Ashwick, Oct. 29. 1720.

Dear Cousin,

I am sorry to find the same spirit still so malignant with you, as it is. Can it be zeal for CHRIST to starve any more than to burn a *Heretick*? And yet I find some, that at present are shocked by the mention of the latter, can without scruple do what in them lies to procure the former. Those pious christians that can find in their hearts, for a different sentiment to deprive you of the means of subsistence, cannot see it is as bad as to give a faggot to your burning: Yet, at least, it proceeds from much the same principle; and if prosecuted in its just consequences, must lead to as bad an extream. May God provide for you, and support you under all your troubles! Believe me, my dear, good friend, I do heartily sympathize with you, and remember you in your afflictions. God calls not only you, and me, but many more to very close trials; that it may appear what we are, and of what sort our faith is: whether it be counterfeit, or real; speculative, or practical; notional, or vital. We have seen many fall. *We yet stand,*

stand: but let us remember, it is *through grace* we are enabled to do so; and to that same grace let us look for daily supply. I trust, we shall hold out to the end. I suppose, I am to be tried yet farther: but I can lay me down in peace, and sleep without anxious thoughts for *to morrow*. *Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof*. You must not expect a fair debate from the men you are engaged with, I doubt: and as for railing, you are not surprized at that treatment, now; and have been too well acquainted with it, not to know how to behave in such a case; *not to render evil for evil*. (*Then taking notice of the publick news in relation to the plague at Marseilles, he farther says,*) The LORD grant, it may not visit us also; or if it does, that it may thoroughly purge us! Happy he, who *abideth in the secret place of the most high, and dwelleth under the shadow of the Almighty!* Psal. 91. The LORD preserve us from the plague of the heart, and the contagion of sin! and then we need not fear, for our own parts, any other.

Let us acquit ourselves like men, suffer like christians, watch like angels, and pray like dying men with living hopes, and remember one another, and the whole *Israel of God*.

NUMB. XIV.

To the Reverend Mr. John Force, upon occasion of the sickness and recovery of their Wives.

Coleford, Feb. 14. 1721-2.

It is my daily prayer, I'll assure you, and shall be, that God would compleat the mercy, and I hope, when we meet, we shall rejoyce together, and talk of
of

of what God has done for us, and expects from us. O my dear brother, how good is it to be resigned to his will, who can will us no hurt, and intends our greater happiness, and brighter glory, by the darkest, and most afflictive providences, as well as by the brightest! *I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.* But now, in the multitude of tempting, distracting, and discouraging thoughts within me, his comforts (I hope I may say they are,) do sometimes delight my soul. Should God deprive us of those tender helps, which even *Adam* in Paradise wanted to complete his happiness; it would be a keen trial indeed. And, if so comprehensive an affliction can have any thing in it's circumstances to aggravate it, worth mentioning; the times in which we live, and the enemies to whom we are daily exposed would be so to us. Ah! what a strong faith, what an entire resignation to the will of God, and what a thorough crucifixion to the world had there need be to bear such a stroke with christian patience! Yet even in these cases we must remember that we are to be patterns, and examples to the church. I hope, we shall endeavour to familiarize our coffins, and our graves to us, by dying daily. What a vapour is life! How tender, and intimate the ties of conjugal affection! How does even nature, as well as grace, constrain us then to be helps to each other in the way to an endless life, and to be daily praying, and endeavouring to secure both our interests in the world of love; that when we are forced to unclasp hands, and souls here below, it may be but for a little interval, to joyn again in a more glorious, and a more endearing union at the marriage of the *Lamb*, who will then meet his church as *a bride adorned for her husband*, and take us up to those more than nuptial joys, which — it is no wonder I am forced to make a break, when I think

of

of what eye *bath not seen*, &c. The LORD prepare us for them!

NUMB. V.

To Mrs. Force, upon the same Occasion.

Coleford, Feb. 15, 1721-2.

I cannot but hope, and believe, that GOD, who is the length of our days, will be so merciful to my good brother in this day of visitation, and affliction, as to give back the wife of his bosom into his arms again, as, (thanks be to his holy name!) he has done to me. Since it was necessary *now* more than ever, that we should be crucified to the world, and dead to its enjoyments in comparison of those spiritual joys, which must be the life of our renewed souls, and give the relish to all other comforts; it may be, GOD saw it necessary for us, that we should be tried to the very last extremity before he interposed in mercy; and that we should be brought to resign our dearest comforts, and to learn to enjoy them more as precarious, and dependent *streams* of consolation, which the GOD of all consolation can in a moment dry up; and not as *springs*, and *fountains*, which we are to expect ever to flow, as we are too apt to imagine of all earthly enjoyments. I hope, GOD has carried you by the borders of the *valley of the shadow of death*, that life may be the less esteemed, and yet better enjoyed. For certainly, we loose that comfort, which we might have in these inferiour things by our overrating them. But when we are brought from our hearts to resign them all before they are ravished from our arms; every day's possession will have a quicker relish, and a purer one

one too. For then we consider not only the *intrinsic value*; but we consider them as so many *tokens of love* also from our heavenly father. With this frame of spirit, and always seasoned with this view of each other, may you, and my very dear friend and brother live many years in the light of GOD's countenance, and the joys of his loving kindness, which are better than life! For *you to live, may it be Christ, and to die unspeakable gain!* Let us live here by the *faith of the son of God*, and feel the *power of his resurrection, and ascension, in newness of life*; and mounting up after him in our desires, and affections, be united to him by the bond of ardent, and constraining love, and *seated together with him in heavenly places*, in our frequent, close, and exalted contemplation; and feel every day the weights drop off from our incumbered, and as yet too earthly souls, which are but *spirits in prison!* And then whoever dies first of us, will have inexpressibly the best of it.

NUMB. XVI.

Coleford, 1722.

Honoured Aunt,

— **T**HIS is a very heavy * stroke upon me, and my dear wife, and her relations. I must depend entirely on the providence of GOD, for our maintenance. GOD has seen fit to call us to disappointments, losses, straits, &c. in our circumstances, as well as hatred, reproach, slander, and persecution from our enemies. I pray GOD to sanctify all these things to us. We are sensible, all is working

* Vid. *Memoirs*, pag. 50, 51, 52.

working for our good, provided we behave ourselves well under it like christians, and not like those who are strangers to a covenant-God, and covenant-promises. You see our case calls for pity and prayer, which I know I may depend upon from you, and all my christian friends. We are chearful still, and would not disgrace the christian religion by sinking under afflictions, or losses, after the manner of infidels and strangers to the heavenly inheritance, as if we had lost our portion, or our best treasure. For that, we hope, is secure from the changes of time. I have often been inculcating on my hearers and friends the vanity of all earthly enjoyments, and the excellency of resignation to divine providence, and I hope on my own heart too. And now God calls me forth to confirm my doctrine by example, and to set before them an instance of self-resignation, and patience under losses and disappointments, that they may be more powerfully induced to do likewise. If this end be answer'd; I shall rejoyce, and bless God, that I gained this loss. However I hope, by the love and strength of the Almighty, we shall ourselves endeavour to improve it to the ends we cannot but know providence intended it for.

NUMB. XVII.

Trowbridge, Sept. 5. 1724.

Honoured Aunt,

— **B** EING removed to another county, and another people, I was resolved to redeem a little time to let you know how the providence

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vidence of GOD has disposed of us. Now seven years are past since it called me from my friends, and intimate acquaintance, to sojourn among strangers; and convinced me that I was born to be a stranger and a pilgrim here on earth, in another sense besides that in which we and all our fathers were so, even so much as to have no certain dwelling place. I found it to be my duty for the sake of a good conscience, to resign every thing that was dear to me, and to bid farewell to my country, and my kindred, and to follow the path, which the sovereign Disposer of my body, my soul, my time, my place, and my all, pointed out to me. I did so, not knowing whither I went; but well knowing, where-ever I went afflictions must abide me, faith be my support, and my integrity defend me, and that my good GOD would be with me, and be as a little sanctuary to me in the country whither I should come, according to his promise, as long as I walked in his statutes, and kept his ordinances to do them.

(What afflictions I have met with since, I best know; but I thank GOD, I do not complain of them. What mercies I have experienced in the midst of them, I have reason to bless GOD for as long as I have a being. And among my temporal mercies, there is none to be compared with that special providence, which directed me to the dear partner of my life, who has approved herself to me doubly dear in her chearful, and excellent behaviour under the very heavy afflictions, it has pleased our heavenly Father to exercise us with, since we came together. I can say, that not one of the family ever drop'd the least reflection upon me; tho' I had lost all, and was to live upon their daughter's fortune, and the incomes, from my preaching, which

which were so very small, that all considered, we were under a necessity of removing.— We are now among a people that are very civil.

May your last days be your best, and the strong consolations of the LORD cheer your soul, and abundantly recompence the weakneses, and pains of a declining body! May the best of the divine blessings fill the house in which you live, and sanctify and cheer every soul of the family! And may we all consider ourselves as strangers, and pilgrims here, and seriously improve precious time, and prepare for our everlasting habitations! Let us pray for each other daily, and fervently; which is, what I hope, I shall endeavour, whilst I am, &c.

F I N I S.



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